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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-036 *22 February 1996*

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Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 16 Feb

NC2102124296

[FBIS Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 16 February edition of the Arabic language newspaper AL-SHA'B that pertain to political Islamic issues.

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14. Tunisian Government Criticized for Arrest Campaign
15. Sudan's Islamic Orientation No Justification for Hostility
16. Egypt Said Watching Eritrean-Israeli Ties

A 40-word report on page 1 says that AL-SHA'B's edition of 20 February will not be published on 'Id al-Fitr.

'ADIL HUSAYN SLAMS GOVERNMENT DECISION TO SELL PUBLIC SECTOR

In a 400-word statement on page 1 under the headline "The Labor Party Condemns the Serious Cabinet Resolution To Liquidate the Public Sector," Labor Party Secretary General 'Adil Husayn discusses the cabinet resolution of 14 February on selling public sector companies. He says the resolution was not surprising to those concerned, namely, the foreigners and the international organizations that speak for them. He stresses that these organizations themselves "dictated" these resolutions to the government long ago and that they are part of the agreement signed with the IMF in September 1993. These measures were supposed to be implemented at the end of 1995, he claims, and were postponed until early in 1996. He argues that the government has been forced to begin implementing them now in response to pressure from U.S. Vice President Al Gore during his recent visit to Cairo. The government is doing this, he says, to resume talks with the IMF and quickly proceed with the so-called Middle East market. The IMF and the United States do not deal with privatization in the way respectable countries understand it, he says, adding that to them it is a process of "plundering" and selling huge assets cheap to foreigners and their agents. He then asks the government how it can decide on such issues behind the people's backs and who gave it trusteeship to sell public sector companies without consultation or explanation.

EHRO CRITICIZES INTERIOR MINISTRY ON DETAINEES

In a 500-word report on pages 1 and 8 headlined "16,000 Detainees Are Exposed to Death in Jail," the Egyptian Human Rights Organization [EHRO] says the Interior Ministry ignores judicial verdicts to release over 16,000 detainees in Egyptian jails. In its latest report published on 7 February, the EHRO says that after the Higher State Security Court hands down a verdict to release a detainee, the Interior Ministry takes him from his jail and detains him in another police post for between one and three weeks, until a new arrest warrant is issued against him. It says this is a flagrant violation of sacred judicial verdicts. It argues that repeated arrests not only cause serious economic and social damage to the families of detainees, but encourage violence and terrorism in society.

PAPER CLAIMS U.S. FORCES FLOW INTO REGION

A 300-word report on page 1 citing AL-HAYAH says that Washington has continued what it calls its surprising military escalation in the region. It says that 25,000 U.S. personnel, including 10,000 marines, flowed into the region in the second half of January. It cites unattributed information that tanks and troop carriers have taken up positions in Gulf countries and that the United States sent huge quantities of ammunition and equipment to the region, from Egypt in the West to Oman in the east, and from Bab el Mandeb in the south to Turkey in the north.

ACTS OF VIOLENCE IN UPPER EGYPT NOTED

A 100-word report on page 1 by Mu'tazz al-Hadidi notes that three sentries were killed by unidentified gunmen in Mallawi on 15 February and that two prominent members of the Islamic Group were killed on 14 February. Unidentified men, believed to belong to Islamic groups, fired on a police post in the Mallawi area, killing one citizen and wounding another.

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ARAB COMMUNITY IN CANADA PROTESTS BAN ON MAJDI HUSAYN VISIT

A 140-word unattributed report on pages 1 and 8 says that the Egyptian, Arab, and Islamic communities in Canada submitted a memorandum to the Canadian Foreign Ministry to protest AL-SHA'B Chief Editor Majdi Husayn's being prevented from entering Canada. These communities said they asked the Canadian Foreign Ministry to grant Husayn a visa to visit Canada, since all the arrangements were made for him to deliver several lectures in Ottawa, Montreal, and Toronto.

LAWYERS ASSOCIATION REJECTS CUSTODIANSHIP

In a 300-word report on pages 1 and 8, the Khalid Yunus and al- Gharbiyah correspondent notes that the Cairo Court for Urgent Cases decided to adjourn the hearing of a suit by adversaries of the Lawyers Association Council to continue the ruling on custodianship. Lawyers doyen Ahmad al-Khawaja stated that reports on violations at the Lawyers Association are untrue and denied reports that the association spent funds on terrorism. He said there are "signs of an intention to impose custodianship on the Lawyers Association." Lawyers Association Secretary General Ahmad Sayf-al-Islam al-Banna says the Lawyers Association was established on a democratic basis and that what is currently happening is "a dispute between the authorities and democracy" and a link in a chain of successive violations by the authorities. He says there are political purposes behind the efforts to impose custodianship, but that the association will not agree to its demise, as happened to the Engineers Association.

ISRAEL SEEN SEEKING TO CLOSE THE POW'S FILE

In a 200-word report on pages 1, and 8, Rabi' Shahin says Israel has refused to notify Egypt of the results of investigations into the civilian and military POW's who were killed in the 1956 and 1967 wars. AL-SHA'B has learned that Israel is stalling and seeks to close the POW file without notifying Egypt of the results of the investigations. Israel did not take any serious steps to uncover the crimes, the report says. AL-SHA'B has also learned that Cairo has ruled out tougher alternatives toward the Zionists following U.S. interference so that the peace process and Egypt's role in it may not be damaged. Washington advised Cairo and Tel Aviv to settle the issue through bilateral contacts.

WRITER REFUTES EGYPTIAN ACCUSATIONS AGAINST SUDAN

In an approximately 5,000-word article on page 3, "With Documents and Officials' Statements We Refute Charges of Terrorism Against Sudan," 'Amir 'Abd-al-Mun'im claims that the Egyptian Government played "a main role" in making the Security Council condemn Sudan. The government, he says, continues to instigate the world to impose unfair sanctions against the Sudanese people. He says Egypt seems to have become "specialized in repressing the Islamic peoples and has turned into a bayonet against our Arab and Muslim brothers." He goes on: "What the Egyptian Government is now doing to Sudan contravenes religion, Arabism, logic, the homeland's supreme interests, and national security." He says it is unreasonable for Egypt to seek to impose an international embargo on Sudan and to starve and kill its people on the pretext of sheltering terrorists— "Islamic opponents"—because if it were true, Egypt would need to pursue the same policy toward the United States and Europe, which shelter Islamic opponents and give them political asylum. He argues that the accusation that Sudan is sheltering the three defendants accused of the attempt on President Mubarak in Addis Ababa is not accurate and is not sufficient proof of Sudan's complicity. Sudan may not know if the defendants entered its territory or if they live there. He argues that the Egyptian Government cannot claim to control the entry and exit of individuals. He says it has repeatedly said that extremists involved in acts of violence enter and leave Egypt illegally because they can forge passports.

The writer accuses Egyptian media of circulating lies spread by the Sudanese Communist Party and opposition. He cites reports published on specific dates by specific writers in the government newspapers AL-AKHBAR and AL-AHRAM regarding the identity of the defendants and sets out to show that they contradict one another. He also notes that the Ethiopian authorities refuted Egyptian media claims that the defendants were Sudanese. He also claims that the Egyptian newspapers accused Sudanese nationals of bombing the Egyptian Embassy in Pakistan and then notes that in an interview with AL-MUSAWWAR the Pakistani interior minister denied that they were Sudanese.

The writer maintains that the Egyptian campaign against Sudan did not begin with the attempt on Mubarak in Addis Ababa. The campaign began in 1992, he asserts, and adds that the government media went out of their way to circulate lies to distort Sudan and incite the world against its Islamic government. He suggests that the government began its campaign once it realized that the Sudanese regime "adheres to applying Islamic shari'ah and to demonstrating its Islamic orientation."

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The writer then notes statements by President Mubarak, his adviser Usamah al-Baz, and Deputy Prime Minister Yusuf Wali since 1992 that there were training camps for terrorists in Sudan as well as Iranian camps there as part of a scheme to destabilize Egypt. He says Egyptian writers fanned this fire. In contrast he cites statements by former Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi, former Interior Minister 'Abd-al-Halim Musa, and Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa that there were no concrete documents or cogent evidence to incriminate Sudan. He says the government seeks to implicate Sudan in false accusations. He asks in whose interest is the Egyptian media's misleading claim, which helps "the arrogant powers to justify their plots to starve and strike at Sudan?" Those who are doing this, he says, "are not serving Egypt, but are harming Egypt, the Arabs, and Muslims" because Sudan provides a strategic depth for Egypt. Destroying Sudan would be a prelude to Egypt's collapse in the interest of the enemies, primarily the Zionists, he concludes.

REASONS FOR PENSIONING OFF SECURITY OFFICIAL REVEALED

Mu'tazz al-Hadidi writes a 1,200-word article on page 4 on the reasons for pensioning off Ahmad al-'Adili, first assistant to the interior minister for state security. Describing him as having been the most dangerous man in the interior ministry, he says that the man assumed his post at a time when public figures were the target of assassination attempts by Islamic groups. He adopted a tough and harsh policy against the Islamic groups until he succeeded in bringing about an ostensible calm. The writer notes that al-'Adili used a new strategy in dealing with the Islamic groups and was one of the enthusiastic advocates of striking at the Muslim Brotherhood members and referring them to military courts. He also notes that he was behind striking at professional associations. He was relieved of his post, al-Hadidi says, because his influence grew too strong, he was involved in acute conflict with other security departments over extending his powers to their duties, and he collected files about officials' corruption.

FORMER OFFICIAL HAILS ISLAM AS SOLUTION TO ECONOMIC PROBLEM

In a 500-word report on page 4, Subhi Buhayri notes that at a seminar in the Opera House on 13 February, former Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz Hijazi stressed that there is no solution to Egypt's economic problems unless the principles of Islam are applied. Hijazi said that all man-made theories and experiments have failed. He added that the theories of the West had detrimental effects on man and the environment and spawned corruption, bribery, nepotism, and domination.

WRITER CRITICIZES PRESS LAW

Mustafa 'Uthman, in a 600-word article headlined "The Fourth Authority Is In Danger" on the same page, discusses Press law 93 of 1995. He says the press reflects the feelings of all segments of the society and is the true parliament that represents all factions of people now that "the doors of the People's Assembly have been closed to all the people except for one sect." He argues that he thought a government that seeks stability would pride itself on what the Egyptian papers publish and seriously take into account criticism. He says he also thought that the rulers would be happy about reports on corruption and would conduct investigations to verify them. What happened, however, is that the government passed the ill-omened press law 93. This law shocked the world, he says, and increased doubts about the possibility of establishing real democracy and free press and cast doubt on reports that Egypt enjoys stability. He says that this law is a real setback for the press, which the government wants to shackle and put behind bars along with the professional associations, political parties, university teaching club members, and student unions.

U.S. ATTEMPTS AGAINST IRAN VIEWED

In a 2,000-word article on page 7 headlined "Iran and the United States: The Elections And The Continuing Duel," Muna 'Aliy-al-Din views the U.S. Congress decision to appropriate $18 million for clandestine operations in Iran. She says that this sum is to meager to cover the travel cost of the secret agents required for such operations in a huge country like Iran. It is illogical for a superpower to announce its intention to carry out subversive operations in another country, she argues, and adds that this announcement is not only provocative but also violates UN resolutions and the agreement concluded between the United States and Iran in Algiers to release the hostages. Announcing intentions to carry out secret operations against Iran shows the matter as if the United states "is not indeed carrying such operations in public and secret." The United States has publicly declared an economic, political, regional, and international embargo against Iran. The U.S. naval and ground presence in the region constitutes a threat and provocation against Iran. She says that Iran, with its 61 million people and its military, economic, and political might, cannot be ignored in any regional arrangements that the United States and Israel are trying to impose on the region. She says that the U.S. move can only be explained in terms of serving elections purposes, which will be held in both the United States and Iran this year. President Clinton seems to want to appear as a hawk after his decision to prevent U.S. companies from

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dealing with Iran failed to elicit a positive response from other European countries. When a U.S. oil company withdrew, a French one stepped in and clinched a deal. The U.S. step on funds against Iran can also be explained as an attempt to foil President Rafsanjani's plan to incite U.S. public opinion against U.S. policy on Iran and gain friendly ties with Europe.

WRITER VIEWS UNREST IN BAHRAIN

In a 1,000-word article on page 7 headlined "The Bahraini Government Backed Down on Promises of Political Reform and the Streets Erupted Against it," Muhammad Jamal 'Arafah discusses the causes of unrest in Bahrain. He says the situation there has repercussions for the Gulf countries, where fear has spread that if things get out of hand in Bahrain the whole Gulf region may be engulfed in fire. He argues that the real causes of the disturbances are the Bahraini Government's refusal to activate the Constitution and revive the dissolved parliament. The opposition forces, both Sunni and Shi'ite, sought a peaceful solution to the crisis with the authorities. They sought to achieve the release of 2,000 detainees, especially five Muslim ulema. He claims that an initial agreement was reached between the two parties and that the opposition forces complied with the agreement. He says the Bahraini authorities not only backed down on the agreement, but also arrested more opponents. He says the government tried to portray the unrest as an Iranian plot against Bahrain instead of addressing the root causes of the problem. This approach, he says, which is backed by Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Oman, will pose greater danger to Bahrain and the whole Gulf, particularly because there are parties who are ready to instigate these countries against Iran.

TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT CRITICIZED FOR ARREST CAMPAIGN

An unattributed 500-word boxed column on the same page headlined "The Opposition in Jail" says that after a four-month detention on political and criminal charges, Tunisia passed a two-year sentence against Mohamed Mouada, the leader of the Democratic Socialist Movement—the largest opposition party—on criminal charges. He will also face a tougher verdict on political charges. He was detained after he addressed a message to the Tunisian president calling for opening the door to freedoms and halting repression, torture, and the muzzling of the press. This step shows that the Tunisian Government is not only refusing to stop political repression and is rigging the elections and resisting the Islamists, but is also persisting in its repressive measures striking at all the forces and parties that call for freedom and free elections, be they Islamist or secular.

SUDAN'S ISLAMIC ORIENTATION NO JUSTIFICATION FOR HOSTILITY

In a 600-word article on page 8 headlined "Sudan's Islamic Orientation Does Not Justify Hostility," Mahfuz 'Azzam cites remarks by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and by Eritrean President Afworki that explain that the reason for the differences with Sudan is its particular understanding of Islam. He argues that it is unimaginable that Sudan's Islamic orientation should be a cause for dispute with the Egyptian regime and people. He says the Egyptian people are Muslim and will not agree that a government that represents them should take a stand hostile to Islam. Otherwise, the regime would lose its legitimacy, particularly as it is bound to function according to the Constitution, which provides that Islamic shari'ah is the main source of legislation. Sudan, he claims, "is being punished because it established a national government that adheres to Islam." It is also unimaginable, he says, that Egypt should have a dispute with Sudan and agree with Eritrean President Afworki, known by everyone as an agent of Israel. He says the Security Council resolution condemning Sudan was not passed because of the accusation that Sudan played a role in the attempt on President Mubarak—the international community could not care less about Africa, its security, or its leaders. Proof of this is that it did nothing when the Burundian and Rwandan presidents were killed and when Israel occupied Arab land and killed Egyptian POW's.

EGYPT SAID WATCHING ERITREAN-ISRAELI TIES

A 200-word unattributed report on page 8 says Egypt is watching Eritrean-Israeli ties.

The whole of the back page features the photos and names of 10 children on the upper half of the page and the photos and names of 10 other children on the bottom half. They are the children of the jailed Muslim Brotherhood leaders. In between the two groups of photos are banner headlines. One is "The Children of Muslim Brotherhood Prisoners on 'Id al-Fitr Sing: Bring Me Back My Daddy," the headline of a poem on this theme. Another headline goes: "Bring Back the Smiles to These Children."

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: Quray' Denies Israeli TV Report on Final Stage Talks

JN2202084496 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0800 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Ahmad Quray', member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, and official Israeli

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sources categorically denied last night's report by Israeli Channel 2 Television that the final-status negotiations scheduled for May will be postponed until after the Israeli elections, which are scheduled for 29 May. Quray' said the Israeli side made no mention of this. Moreover, a senior Israeli Government official accused the Israeli opposition Likud bloc of spreading unfounded rumors.

Palestinian Affairs: U.S. To Extradite Abu-Marzuq To Aid Labor, Clinton Campaign

TA2102153496 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 18 Feb 96 p 5

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Amman, QUDS PRESS — Engineer Ibrahim Ghawshah, official Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] spokesman, has said that the upcoming Israeli elections will not bring about a shift in the official Israeli stance toward the important Palestinian issues regardless of whether the ruling Labor Party or the opposition Likud Party wins those elections. [passage omitted]

On another development, Ghawshah said Hamas has information indicating that the U.S. Administration is seeking to extradite Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq, former Hamas political bureau head who has been incarcerated in a U.S. prison since July, to the Israeli authorities.

Ghawshah added: A frantic climate of incitement against so-called Islamic terrorism is being fostered in the United States in order to cover up any measures by the U.S. Administration to extradite Dr. Abu-Marzuq.

He noted that Dr. Abu-Marzuq's extradition "will achieve mutual benefits both for the ruling Labor Party in its upcoming election campaign and for the Clinton administration, which will gain the support of the Zionist lobby which controls the levers of U.S. decisionmaking."

Ghawshah said that if the U.S. Administration extradites Dr. Abu-Marzuq to Israel, Hamas will be forced to reassess its options and draw the lessons.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Urayqat Warns Talks To Halt Over Confiscations, Settlement

TA2102183496 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 21 Feb 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] In Jerusalem, the Palestinian and Israeli sides, headed by Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat and Foreign Ministry legal adviser Yo'el Singer, held a meeting today in which many outstanding issues between the two sides were discussed in preparation for tomorrow's meeting of the Steering and Monitoring Committee. The details in Kayid Zahir's report:

[Begin recording] [Zahir] Today's meeting between the Palestinian and Israeli sides was held to discuss the situation and find solutions to many outstanding issues, above all the confiscation of land, bypass roads, the erection of walls in the Tulkarm area and around Rachel's Tomb, the safe passages, and redeployment in Hebron. Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, head of the Palestinian side, was not able to enjoy the 'Id al-Fitr holiday like other people and was forced, along with Brigadier Generals Ziyad al-Atrash and Hajj Isma'il, to hold this meeting in order to crystallize positions in preparation for tomorrow's meeting.

['Urayqat] Today we managed to list 49 points of contention — in fact, Israeli violations — but the most serious point is the confiscation of land and the continuation of settlement activity. It was essential that we send a clear message on behalf of his excellency, the president: The Israeli Government cannot decide the fate of the final stage talks by settlement activity and land expropriation. If it continues with settlement activity and confiscation of land, there will be no alternative but to halt the talks.

As far as Hebron is concerned, today we submitted a list of names of Palestinians who will take over Hebron. The Palestinian side will be headed by Brig. Gen. Hajj Isma'il, commander of the West Bank. We submitted the list after his excellency signed the decree. We are awaiting a list of names from the Israeli side. We want to launch immediate talks on the international presence in Hebron, the roads they will use, their number, and [words indistinct].

The Israeli side cannot behave unilaterally. There is a clear clause in the final articles of the Taba agreement stipulating that no side can adopt unilateral measures that might affect the final stage talks. Everything that the Israeli Government is doing now represents unilateral measures. I cannot stand guard over the lips of Peres or other Israeli officials. Everyone should understand that we will not pay the price of the Israeli election campaigns. Either settlement activity or peace. The Israeli Government cannot reconcile the two. There is a frantic race now in Israel. Our land is becoming the victim of this race. Settlement activity is continuing. This must stop, because there is a real danger to the peace process. [end recording]

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas—Hamimi Participation in Jerusalem Seminar Termed 'Personal Decision'

TA2102160496 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 20 Feb 96 p 5

[FBIS Translated Text] Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] has issued the following statement:

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Citing Israel Television, some news agencies reported that discussions have been held on the issue of Jerusalem between Palestinian and Israeli figures. The name of Jamil Hamami was mentioned among those who participated in these discussions.

Hamas affirms to all its clear and categorical position that rejects the agreements with Israel, the negotiations that preceded them, and their results. It also affirms its refusal to participate under any circumstances in any negotiations or discussions, whether on Jerusalem or other issues, relating to the so-called settlement plan.

As for the participation of Brother Jamil Hamimi in a seminar on the issue of Jerusalem, although it was a personal decision that does not represent the position of Hamas and was not made with Hamas' permission, it cannot under any circumstances be viewed as participation in so-called negotiations with the Israelis on the status of Jerusalem, which has been and will remain united and the property of the Palestinian people and the entire Arab and Islamic nations.

Palestinian Affairs: Quray' Interviewed on Status of Negotiations

MM2002162796 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 19 Feb 96 p 4

[Interview with Ahmad Quray', Palestinian "official in charge of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiation file during the transitional period negotiations," by Husayn Hijazi in Gaza; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Hijazi] You have recently repeatedly spoken of violations of the Taba agreement. Some people blame you for agreeing to the redeployment of Israeli forces after Israel built the bypass roads, which means that Israel takes vast areas.

[Quray'] First of all let us be honest and truthful. The redeployment has been implemented according to the timetable agreed in Taba. The first phase of the redeployment has practically been completed. True, there was a serious problem regarding the bypass roads but that was unnecessary as we approach negotiations on the final solution. The period separating the redeployment from these negotiations is no more than four months. But our position is clear and specific, namely that whatever measures Israel takes in this connection are null and void because, to put it very briefly, this territory is ours and we consider [Israeli] settlement to be an illegitimate aggression. We hold the same view regarding Jerusalem which we consider to be an occupied territory which must be given back. But the central point which I wish to stress is that we the Palestinians have so far not signed a peace treaty. Such issues as settlement and Jerusalem are the issues which will be the umbrella for the final solution.

We signed the Declaration of Principles which might lead to a peace treaty but we have not yet signed a peace treaty. The Gaza-Jericho agreement was a trust-building agreement to start the process. The recent Taba-Washington agreement was a temporary transitional agreement. These agreements put us on a new road which might lead to a peace treaty and which also might lead to failure of the process, because our position is clear and candid. That position is this: Jerusalem is ours, the settlements constitute an illegitimate act of aggression, the refugees are entitled to repatriation or compensation and the choice is theirs, sovereignty and the state are not negotiable issues. In the light of the resolution of these matters we will know whether we will sign a peace treaty or the conflict will continue unresolved.

[Hijazi] Fine, but the Israelis appear to be trying to achieve certain faits accomplis on the ground before the final solution, based on their own concept of such a solution.

[Quray'] That is what they are doing, but when we sit down to negotiate a final solution, all the files will be open. Because many people sometimes lose sight of what the final solution means, let me define it. A final solution is a solution of all aspects of the Palestinian question. We have so far negotiated an interim solution. In the Oslo agreement we had two words: Implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which means Israeli withdrawal from all the Palestinian territory. And so, having completed the transitional solution, we now face negotiations for the settlement of all aspects of the Palestinian question. In other words, we are now almost in the same negotiating position as the other Arab cordon states, Egypt in the past and Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan recently. So, we have reached this point now, not before the recent agreement, because what happened in Madrid was that we went there to negotiate a transitional agreement. That is why today, more than any other time in the past, we may be in need of the support of our Arab brothers in Egypt, Syria, Jordan, the Arab Gulf states, Saudi Arabia, and Morocco, because this time we are approaching negotiations on a solution to the Palestinian question as such.

[Hijazi] For that same reason, do you not believe that if there is progress in the settlement with Syria, the Palestinians will find themselves back in the rear after having been out in front?

[Quray'] No, on the contrary. As long as we are talking about a comprehensive solution, any success on the

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Syrian track will be in our favor. It seems to me that if Syria gets a just solution, as we hope it will, the Palestinian issue would be one aspect of that solution. I am sure that Syria will help us and we will get more Arab support than in the past. My sole reason for believing this is that the Arabs realize as much as we do that it is a question of negotiations for a final solution to the Palestinian problem. The Palestinian question was and still is the core and central point of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and a comprehensive settlement is inconceivable without the settlement of all aspects of that question.

[Hijazi] Is it for that reason that you see the tripartite summit called for by President Mubarak and King Husayn of Jordan after the 'Id, with Yasir 'Arafat's participation, as a pointer to such expectations?

[Quray'] Yes, that is a very strong signal with clear unmissable significance because the tripartite summit which will be held after the 'Id is for the purpose of demonstrating Egyptian and Jordanian support for the Palestinian position on the eve of the negotiations on a final solution and for the purpose of reaching a Palestinian-Arab agreement on the shape and framework of such a solution. The truth is that in Oslo we did not get everything but we also did not forfeit anything. The negotiations on the final solution are the big battle to confirm our comprehensive concept of a solution for our issue. It is a good omen that the Arab position is in harmony with our concept and line in this battle.

[Hijazi] Let us go back a little and look at the files, what of the transitional file remains unimplemented so far? I am referring to the Cairo and Washington agreements.

[Quray'] Much remains, because Israel is still procrastinating on implementation. Take, for instance, the matter of the detainees and the POW's. The provisions of the agreement are clear but Israel has only released some and is still holding a large number. If the agreement was implemented there would be no more than 200 detainees left in Israeli prisons who would supposedly be released under the final settlement negotiations. Then there are the questions of the settlements and Jerusalem on which discussions, it was agreed, will be held during the negotiations on the final solution. That means that neither side has a right to alter or change the situation in the settlements or Jerusalem but, regrettably, on the question of the settlements, there has been an escalation of Israeli activities, with all resources made available, to enlarge them. Just as an example of such activities, I mention the settlements of Ma'ale 'Adanim, Gevat, Ze'ev, Ravat, and others where expansion has continued as if in a race against time to impose a fait accompli. The situation in Jerusalem is similar to that of the settlements where work is proceeding headlong in an attempt to create new faits accomplis on the ground. That is in addition to the measures meant to tighten the noose around the national institutions and tighten the isolation of Jerusalem. We reject all these measures and activities and cannot possibly accept them. Furthermore, these measures and operations are a cause for us to be seriously concerned about their intentions.

[Hijazi] Have you discussed these matters with anyone? I mean the United States, sponsor of the negotiations?

[Quray'] Yes, and President 'Arafat is constantly in contact with his brother President Husni Mubarak and the other Arab brothers to keep them informed about what is taking place. We have informed the Americans more than once during the 'Arafat-Christopher meetings and in our other contacts with them. We told them about these repeated violations and asked them to take a clear stand on that. This is because the United States has a moral and political responsibility regarding the agreements reached under its sponsorship. By expanding these settlements, Israel is flagrantly violating the terms of the guarantees for the Israeli loans which set the condition that the existing settlements should not be enlarged, but that expansion continues. The building of bypass roads is also continuing. We reject that process because it constitutes a part of the settlements and it destroys land. Here too there should be a clear U.S. role. While calling on us to amend the charter, the U.S. Administration should make Israel understand that the settlement must stop. The other matter — to go back to the transitional-period file — is that of the refugees. Regrettably, that issue has not been given the attention it deserves in the media but we should not engage in a Byzantine argument about the definition of a refugee. The refugees' rights were confirmed in the Oslo agreement. The discussions now should be not about defining the refugees but about how to repatriate them, that is about how many could be allowed to return every month. That is in addition to numerous other issues such as the closures which, as brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] said, inflicted losses on us exceeding the aid the donor states give us, not to mention the fact that the closures contravene the trade agreement between us and them.

[Hijazi] And what about the issue of the safe corridor?

[Quray'] That is another striking example of the way in which implementation is tackled. We and they agree on something and then they violate that agreement, and so on. But on that point I wish to say that we do not want a link like a bridge hanging in the air, we want a regional geographical link on the ground. That is the crux of the matter. We talk about regional and geographical unity

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of Palestinian territory, not about unity hanging in the air.

[Hijazi] Could we discuss the essence of the issues postponed until the final solution?

[Quray'] Our position is clear and it stems from international legitimacy. Resolution 242 discusses the refugees. When we talk about the refugees we know that there is a resolution which lays down the framework for the settlement of all aspects of that issue. When we talk about settlement of all aspects of the Palestinian question we are talking about settlement of the refugee question on the basis of Resolution 194. That resolution is a main card in our hands, and it is a firm right. After settlement of the refugee problem we will discuss the settlements, Jerusalem, and the remaining issues. First, however, we must talk about Resolutions 242 and 338 which link the territories occupied in the war of June 1967 to settlement of the refugees issue.

[Hijazi] There have noticeably been some declarations of new positions within the Labor Party regarding the final solution. Some views have, for instance, been expressed by Nissim Zvili, Hayim Ramon, and Yosi Beilin, and even by (Prime Minister) Shim'on Peres, about recognition of a state and abandonment of the Alon theory and the Jordan Valley settlements. Other views are also circulating. How do you view what is being said in their camp?

[Quray'] Without doubt there are major interactions within the Israeli camp. A close observation of what is going on there would show that there is a trend favoring the idea of acceptable coexistence with the other (Palestinian) side but, this time, not according to what the Israelis want. If that trend is to gain credibility and prevail then I believe that all the issues I have mentioned would be resolved and settled. I do not believe that any Palestinian would accept a solution with continuation of the settlements. I am now certain that settlement was one of the main erroneous decisions they made. The settlement card may be seen as a bargaining card or it may be that they really wanted to usurp the territory or impose hegemony. I say that if they really want to address peace and seek a peace treaty with us then settlement must end. The same thing applies to Jerusalem. They have to realize that it is impossible for any Palestinian to accept a solution that excludes Jerusalem because such a solution would never last and is absolutely unacceptable. Jerusalem is the capital of the Palestinian state and cannot be anything but that. When Israel annexed Jerusalem it was only shackling itself but it must now break the chain and free itself from it if it wants a lasting solution because it is these issues which will ultimately determine the direction, whether there is a peace treaty or not.

[Hijazi] Unlike past negotiations, your will now be negotiating in the presence of the elected Palestinian Legislative Council. Some are already talking about a role for that council in the negotiations.

[Quray'] I want to remove from the minds of some people the idea that the Legislative Council could negotiate. The PLO is in charge of the negotiations. It is the party which concludes any international agreements with Israel. It is with it that Israel concludes agreements and it is with it that Israel negotiates in practice. The Palestinian National Authority takes care of the internal situation, the executive situation. The Legislative Council members are members of the Palestine National Council [PNC] which is the only body entitled to draw up the general Palestinian policy and strategy. The Legislative Council is committed to implementing that policy. In other words, the PNC draws up the general policy and the Legislative Council adheres to its framework and lines. The PLO is the party which sets the ceiling and which negotiates. The real hot and decisive negotiations have now started. But I also say that the (Legislative) Council is an important landmark in the history of the Palestinian people because it is the real mechanism for controlling the Authority's performance and confirming the principles of clarity and accountability in relation to the Palestinian Authority's work, and also for laying sound and real foundations for a Palestinian civil and democratic society and the foundations and basis of the future independent Palestinian state which will come soon, God willing.

Palestinian Affairs: Plan To Demand Compensation for Knesset, Supreme Court Land

TA2102162996 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 21 Feb 96 p 12

[Report by Itamar Eichner]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinians plan to demand that the Israeli Government compensate them for the land on which the Knesset and the Supreme Court are located, which was abandoned by Arabs during the War of Independence.

The land belonged to the Arab village of Shaykh Badr (Giv'at Ram), which was abandoned during the war. A Palestinian body, "The Committee for the Defense of the Water and the Land," headed by Attorney Khadr Shuqayrat, has begun to collect information and documents to prove ownership of the lands. "We know for certain that the Knesset and the Supreme Court land used to belong to Arabs. We are currently investigating

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what can be done through legal means to compensate the landowners," Shuqayrat said.

Jerusalem municipal sources believe that the Palestinian demand for assets in the western part of the town will be presented with the opening of the negotiations on the permanent settlement in May.

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Maliki Denies Reports on Loss of Position in PFLP

TA2102180496 Ramallah AL-AYYAM in Arabic 19 Feb 96 p 4

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Ramallah, AL-AYYAM — Dr. Riyad al-Maliki, a Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] leader, stated that he has received an encouraging telephone call from Damascus in which PFLP officials assured him that the situation in the front will remain the same until the PFLP's general conference is convened.

Al-Maliki denied reports by international news media that he no longer represents the PFLP, is not authorized to speak on its behalf, and is no longer a member of any of its leading bodies.

Al-Maliki told AL-AYYAM: I have not received any official notification about this matter. On the contrary, yesterday I received a call from a member of the front's Political Bureau in Damascus. This conversation was very encouraging. I was told that I will soon receive a letter from PFLP Secretary General George Habash.

Al-Maliki stressed: Yesterday, I was told that everything will remain the same until the convocation of the PFLP conference, which will determine all measures to be taken and assess the experience of the elections and the current stage.

The sixth PFLP conference is expected to be held within the coming three months at the latest.

Al-Maliki discounted the international news media reports. He said: It is clear that there is a contradiction between what PFLP sources in Damascus said and the call I received yesterday. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: PLO Executive Committee To Meet in Gaza 8 Mar

JN2102190096 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1000 GMT 21 Feb 96

[Corrected version of report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza filed as JN2102113196; explanatory note describes differences from initial FBIS version]

[FBIS Translated Text] Jamal al-Surani, secretary of the PLO Executive Committee, affirmed that the committee will hold a meeting in Gaza on 8 March. In statements to Voice of Palestine, al-Surani said that during the meeting, which will be chaired by President Yasir 'Arafat, the PLO Executive Committee will discuss a number of important issues. These issues include settlement building; the confiscation of land; Israeli violations of the agreement; the issue of crossings, which has not yet been implemented; the military siege policy adopted by the occupation authorities; and issues that will be discussed during negotiations on the final stage, especially Jerusalem, the settlements, the refugees, the borders, and the prisoners.

Furthermore, the PLO Executive Committee will discuss a date for the elected Legislative Council's meeting, forming the council of ministers, and calling on the Palestine National Council [initial FBIS version read "Palestinian National Authority"] to hold a meeting. Al-Surani said that an invitation to attend the meeting is extended to all members of the PLO Executive Committee inside and outside the homeland.

This PLO Executive Committee meeting comes as a continuation of its meetings, which began in the Egyptian city of al-'Arish on 5 February. The committee's meeting is the second one that will be held inside the homeland.

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: 'Secret' Permanent Accord Document Detailed

TA2202102796 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 22 Feb 96 p A2

[Article by Ze'ev Schiff: "The Teams Held 20 Meetings in Israel and Europe"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The "true story" about the secret negotiations with the Palestinians is not the one presented by the Likud with the opening of their election campaign. The Likud claimed that there are negotiations to divide Jerusalem, headed by Yosi Beilin for Israel and Faysal al-Husayni for the Palestinians.

It now transpires that the meetings in Jerusalem with al-Husayni and Mahdi 'Abd-al-Hadi, head of PASSIA, Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, did not go beyond academic discussions, as has often been reported in the past. The meetings were also not declared secret.

The secret negotiations were held in various locations for an extended period and with different Palestinians and focused on the permanent solution. They included the Jerusalem issue, but the sides did not succeed in fully resolving that problem.

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In general, some 20 meetings were held between the teams for over a year. They were held in Sweden, Cyprus, Holland, England, and Jerusalem. The sides managed to uphold the secrecy, but the Israeli intelligence service found out about the contacts at a fairly early stage. Israeli intelligence also found out that extraordinary contacts were being held in Oslo on the eve of the August 1993 agreement.

On the Palestinian side, the participants were Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas], Hasan 'Asfur, Ahmad Khalidi, and Husayn al-'Ara. Ahmad Quray' was also in on the secret. On the Israeli side, the participants were Minister Yosi Beilin, Professor Ya'ir Hirschfeld, and Dr. Ron Pundaq. Nimrod Novik, Prime Minister Peres' former political adviser, also knew about the contacts. Foreign Ministry Director General Uri Savir received a report on the document of understandings.

These are the main points in the document of understandings:

— Israel would agree to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

— The permanent borders (delineated in maps in the appendix) and the settlements: Israel's territory would include large settlements like Ari'el, Ma'ale Adumim, and the 'Etzyon Bloc. As a result, most of the settlers would remain inside Israel. The teams worked on the principle of leaving as few Palestinians as possible in the territory to be annexed to Israel in the permanent agreement. Only three small Arab villages would be transferred to Israeli territory, one of them near Kfar 'Etzyon and two near Ari'el.

The Jewish settlers in these settlements not included in Israel's territory would be able to live in the Palestinian state, and they would not be forced to evacuate. They would be able to have dual Israeli-Palestinian citizenship or become permanent residents of the Palestinian state.

— The Jordan Rift Valley: Three military areas would be set up in the territory under Israeli control, each battalion size. Early warning stations would be set up in these areas. The Jordan Rift Valley, including the border crossings, would be transferred to the Palestinians in the year 2007 when full peace would reign.

— Jerusalem: The town's boundaries would be greatly expanded, and a supermunicipality of "Greater Jerusalem" would be set up. The eastern part would include the villages of al-'Ayzariyah and Abu-Dis and would be called al-Quds. The other part, the capital Jerusalem, would also include Ma'ale Adumim. The Temple Mount (Haram al-Sharif, as the Arabs call it) would be declared extraterritorial and would be controlled by the Palestinians. The Church of the Holy Sepulcher would be held by the Palestinians without being declared extraterritorial. Agreement has not been reached on the status of the Old City, an issue which remains open.

— The link between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank: Israel would agree to an extraterritorial corridor at the narrowest point linking the Gaza Strip with the Palestinian areas of the West Bank.

— Refugees: Israel would assist financially and through other means to absorb Palestinian refugees outside its borders. Israel would agree to the unification of families on its territory. The Palestinians would continue to claim the moral right to return by the refugees, but Israel does not have to accept that position.

— Demilitarization: The Palestinian state would be demilitarized. All the forces on its territory and their arms would be agreed to by Israel.

— Ending the conflict: The agreement would state that the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, including the Palestinian refugee problem, is thereby over. The Palestinians would not make additional demands of Israel.

After the teams completed their work, the final document and the appendix with maps were presented to the two leaders. The Palestinian team presented the accord to Palestinian Authority President Yasir 'Arafat. His initial reaction was that he would find it difficult to get such an agreement passed and that it would definitely have serious opposition. Abu-Mazin, on the other hand, said that in his view, the agreement can be approved within a month if it transpires that the Israeli Government supports it.

When the drafting was completed on 1 November 1995, the teams considered presenting their efforts to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, but assassin Yig'al 'Amir prevented that from happening. Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' reaction was skeptical from the outset, although he did not oppose Minister Yosi Beilin's activity and his effort to reach a permanent agreement with the Palestinians.

Peres' opposition was mainly due to three reasons: First, the agreement does not include a binding link between the Palestinian state to be set up and Jordan; second, on the Jerusalem issue, the teams went a step forward, but that sensitive problem in effect remains unresolved in the agreement of understanding; and third, Peres' refusal to transfer the Jordan Rift Valley, even if only in the distant future, to the Palestinians. Such a move, Peres believes, would put an end to the idea of a security border along the Jordan River.

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The bottom line is that the document of understanding was prepared by official elements on both sides, but it cannot become an agreement as long as the prime minister opposes its main points. It is therefore an agreement between Yosi Beilin and Abu-Mazin, and they will have to decide whether to fight for it and how. It is nevertheless clear that this is a new start for the talks on a permanent settlement, which are due to begin in May.

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Algeria

Algeria: 2 Islamic Leaders Reportedly Killed

LD2202103296 Paris France-2 Teletext in French 0929 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The leaders of armed Islamic groups in Boufarik and Larbaa, south of Algiers, have recently been killed by security forces.

This is what the Arabic-language daily AL-KHABAR reported on 22 February.

The "amir" of Boufarik, Antar Zouabri, a member of the GIA [Armed Islamic Group] was reportedly killed on Monday [19 February]. Zouabri and his three brothers have killed dozens of people and staged dozens of sabotage attacks.

Moreover, the "amir" of Larbaa has reportedly also been killed this week.

Algeria: Aide of Youth, Sports Minister Shot

LD2202093596 Paris France-Info Radio in French 0900 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] There has been another assassination in Algeria. Although it took place last Sunday [18 February], it was only reported this morning by the Algerian press.

An aide of the Algerian youth and sports minister was shot dead by two unknown men outside his home in Algiers.

Algeria: Breakaway Makhloufi Group Threatens 'War' on GIA

MM2102170696 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 21 Feb 96 p 6

[Report by Kamil al-Tawil: "Makhloufi Threatens To Declare War on the 'Group'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London — A statement carrying the signature of Said Makhloufi, amir of the Islamic State Movement [MEI], yesterday threatened to declare war on the Armed Islamic Group [GIA] if it does not release some of the movement's detained leaders. AL-HAYAH was unable to confirm the authenticity of that threat which, if genuine, confirms that the more hardline trend within the Algerian group is in full control of its leadership and that it has now moved to liquidate the MEI now that most leaders of the Djezaara trend, which was led by the late Mohamed Said, have been killed.

Makhloufi is known to have been one of the former leaders of the Islamic [Salvation] Front [FIS] and a signatory of the "civil disobedience" statement of June 1991 which led to the arrest of FIS leaders headed by Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj. After shifting to armed action following the cancellation of the elections early in 1992, Makhloufi founded the MEI. That movement had a tripartite leadership which, in addition to him, included Major General Abdelkader Chbouti and Rabeh Qattaf. In the spring of 1994 Makhloufi announced that he was joining the AIG under the leadership of its leader Cherif Gousmi (Abou Abdallah Ahmed). Also joining the GIA in that unity move was the Djezaara trend representing the FIS (the unity statement was signed for the FIS by Abderrezak Redjam in the presence of Mohamed Said).

That unity, however, did not last long. There were constant reports of differences between its various parties. In that context, Said Makhloufi, in a recorded tape in his own voice, launched a fierce campaign against Shaykh Mohamed Said vehemently criticizing the Djezaara ideas. There were also reports that the Djezaara trend itself — which included intellectuals influenced by the ideas of Malek Ben Nabi — did not approve of many operations carried out by the GIA such as the killing of women and FIS leaders. Differences erupted within the GIA after Djemal Zetouni (Abou Abderrahmane Amin) succeeded Gousmi, who was killed by the security forces in September 1994, as its amir. In the second half of last year (1995) the GIA hardliners began liquidating the Djezaara trend and took responsibility for killing Mohamed Said, Abderrezak Redjam, and scores of other Djezaara leaders. The liquidation of that trend led to the withdrawal of several groups from the GIA (such as the group led by Moustafa Kertali in the Larbaa region).

In the statement received by AL-HAYAH yesterday, Makhloufi said that he was breaking his silence "in support of what is right and against what is wrong, and to ward off the injustice to the nation...following the serious situation in the jihad arena after the renegades managed to lead the GIA." Those opposed to the current leadership of the GIA call its members "renegades" because it has shed the blood of those opposed to it in the Islamic trends.

The statement said that "the MEI and most of its leadership members were the first to declare jihad against the rulers of the country who have departed from the path of God and rule against his will. To preserve unity of ranks and strengthen the jihad, the movement announced that it was joining the banner of the GIA in the days of...Abou Abdallah Ahmed. That unity became a calamity for everyone when the renegades took over its leadership, especially Abou Abderrahmane Amin, Bourehanah [as transliterated], Aboutelhah Djenoubi, and other leaders, from the Djezaara. The MEI had no alternative but to break away from that pretentious group and become totally independent from it."

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Makhloufi did not say when his movement announced its independence from the GIA.

He pointed out that the GIA went too far in its folly and sentenced the MEI leaders to death. "It did not stop at that but arrested some of the movement's leaders in Djelfa and Malyana [as transliterated] and handed them over to the Shari'ah officer Bourehanah for trial." He added: "The movement is today certain that the GIA leadership has been infiltrated by the cursed intelligence [service], and has irrefutable evidence that its amir Abou Abderrahmane Amin has links with the intelligence [service].... The movement has given copies of the documents it has in its possession to some leaders of the GIA who had announced their defection from the arrogant leadership which allowed the murder of pregnant women and children and condoned adultery...on the grounds of taking advantage. Every mujahid who cares about unity of ranks can come to the movement's headquarters to discuss this matter. The movement announces that it will declare war on the renegades if they do not release its leaders within one week." The statement carries the number two. AL-HAYAH did not receive the first.

Algeria: Prime Minister Undergoes Surgery

LD2102183196 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1800 GMT 21 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia has undergone a successful surgical operation at the military hospital in Ain Naadja [in Algiers, the Algerian news agency APS reported today quoting a source close to the Ministry of Health and Population.

The prime minister was admitted to hospital on 18 February, the eve of 'Id al-Fitr, suffering from an acute gall-bladder attack. Ouyahia is said to be in satisfactory condition.

Egypt

Egypt: Mubarak Interviewed on Relations With Saudi Arabia, Iraq

NC2102214696 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2105 GMT 21 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 21 Feb (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has urged Egyptians to work more and produce more for the sake of posterity, affirming that "what we are doing now is for the sake of posterity which must have the prerequisites for a dignified life."

In a statement to be published in the 22 February issue of the newspaper AL-JUMHURYIAH, President Mubarak said: "I follow everything in the government down to the smallest details, for the sake of the people. I always ask the prime minister that the resolutions issued in any sphere truly and genuinely express the people's desires and hopes." He added: "We are pursuing a correct course. We are doing our best in the field of reconstruction, in providing job opportunities for youth, and in raising incomes. I can say that we have indeed started a big leap. All this requires big expenditures." Giving an example, President Mubarak said that "the reconstruction of Sinai requires 75 billion pounds. It is a very huge project which we cannot implement overnight. God willing, we will implement the project by stages according to the proposed programs."

On the outcome of his recent visit to Saudi Arabia, President Mubarak said: "Relations between us and Saudi Arabia are excellent. They span the ages. The Saudi brothers appreciate us greatly. An isolated incident or two isolated incidents may occur, but this does not affect in any way the progress of our relations. We and they are well aware of this fact." He added: "We have nearly 1.5 million Egyptian citizens in Saudi Arabia performing their work in an excellent way and accepting their hospitality. I reaffirm that the two countries have joint interests."

Commenting on the return of Lieutenant General Husayn Kamil to Iraq, President Mubarak said: "I have said in the past that this event must not blown out of proportion. We based this statement on a full assessment of the conditions and circumstances and a sound evaluation of the situation. Generally speaking, this is an opportunity to reaffirm that we do not interfere in Iraq's affairs. Whatever happens there is their own business."

On the peace process, President Mubarak said: "Egypt has called for peace and rejected any alternative to it due to our deep and firm belief in it. Therefore, the process will not stop. We hope the ongoing negotiations between Syria and Israel will bear fruit. Peace is in the interest of all the people of the region and the people of the whole world without exception."

Egypt: Islamic Group Warns 'God's Enemies' Over 'Abd-al-Rahman

MM2102151396 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 21 Feb 96 p 4

[Unattributed report: "Islamic Group in Egypt Urges Formation of International Front"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — The Islamic Group organization in Egypt has urged the formation of "a front capable of leading the Muslim nation, to deliver it from its ordeal." In

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a statement issued yesterday, of which AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has received a copy, it said that this is "a matter ordained by religion, required by the situation, and dictated by the necessity to confront God's enemies." Addressing itself to the 'Id [-al-Fitr] day, the statement said: "Oh 'Id, tell the U.S. White House that we will not forget its hostile position toward Islam, its scholars, and youth. Our painful blows directed at God's enemies will not stop until we have cleansed the earth of their filth and freed our prisoners from their jails." In this context it listed the names of Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, Musa Abu-Marzuq, Sayyid Nusayr, and Abu-Halimah.

Egypt: Prosecution Indicts, Detains 35 MB Members

NC2102165496 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1600 GMT 21 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Al-Fayyum, 21 Feb (MENA)—Al-Fayyum's prosecution has ordered the detention of 35 suspects belonging to the dissolved Muslim Brotherhood [MB] for 15 days pending investigation. The prosecution charged them with possessing leaflets and inciting the public.

The suspects were arrested two days ago. A team of prosecutors supervised by Chief Prosecutor Faysal Faraj was in charge of the investigation.

Many lawyers who accompanied the suspects argued that the search and arrest measures were illegal and that the seized material is not banned and is being circulated in markets.

Egypt: Baraq Statements on Israel's Situation Criticized

NC2102124896

[FBIS Report] Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic on 15 February publishes on page 1 a "Washington—News Agencies" datelined report on statements Israeli Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq made in the United States before a crowd of Jews, in which he said that "Israel lives inside a villa in the jungle and this villa is rich with civilization and technology. Outside the windows of the villa, other laws and regulations apply, and there is no place, nor are there any rights, for the weak."

He spoke about negotiations with Syria, saying that they are taking place from a position of power and allowing Israel a great degree of political maneuvering. Baraq said: "The shift in Arab thinking stems originally from the fact that the Arab World realized our capabilities and that we have nuclear power."

AL-AHRAM follows this report with a "Comment" on page 1. The following is the text:

"When Israeli Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq uses this belligerent language, aggressive and hostile tone, and erroneous logic, he violates all of Israel's pledges of peace and increases suspicions regarding its real intentions in the region. In fact, these statements reveal a clear contradiction between Israel's repeated claims that it wants to coexist with its neighbors in the region, and its overwhelming desire to impose hegemony and superiority over others.

"Perhaps Baraq wants to gain the support of American Jews as early as possible in an attempt to topple Peres and occupy the seat of Israeli prime minister. Baraq knows very well that his provocative statements are far removed from the real situation in Israel, which is not very pleasant. Israel's human rights violations are known everywhere. It is the last entity to talk about rights, duties, and laws. Baraq disregarded facts and repeated the same slogans as the extremists. He has placed Israel's intentions under suspicion and doubt."

Egypt: Columnist Criticizes U.S. Military Build-Up in Middle East

NC2102134396 Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English 15 Feb 96 p 9

[Column by Salamah Ahmad Salamah from "Close Up": "A Vicious Synonym"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] One of the most contradictory aspects of the Middle East peace process has been the consistent build up of the US' military presence in the region and the continuous help provided by the Americans to Israel in developing its own military capabilities.

Certainly such military developments appear at odds with the atmosphere created by the Oslo agreements between Israel and the Palestinians. And they seem to run counter to a process that has already seen the conclusion of agreements between Jordan and Israel and the start of settlement negotiations between Israel and Syria.

Several Arab states have already rushed to open diplomatic representation bureaus with Israel. Formal and semi-fonnal delegations have been sent, trade agreements contracted. Conferences intended to facilitate economic cooperation have already been held in Casablanca and in Amman and preparations are currently underway for a third such conference in Cairo.

Conditions in the region, then, appear to be geared towards a relaxation of tensions, certainly at least as

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far as they are portrayed by the Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres, one of the most vociferous proponents of Middle Easternism. Yet the rose-tinted glasses through which the prospects for peace tend to be viewed obscure developments that are not necessarily conducive to peace.

Certainly little attention appears to have been paid to the recent reiteration by Washington of its intention to maintain Israel's military superiority. The US has, in fact, already collaborated with Israel in the development and production of new types of missiles. Recently the deserts of New Mexico resounded to the sounds of military testing as a new American-Israeli armament system, which uses laser rays to counter and destroy short-range missiles, was put through it paces.

At the same time that these tests were being undertaken Israel demanded that the US stop selling surveillance satellites to Arab countries and limit sales of advanced technology to Arab governments. Simultaneously Israel, with the aim of lessening its dependency on the US, continues to receive material assistance and technology from the Americans in developing its own satellites.

Apart from its assistance to Israel the US, on the basis of a perceived threat from Iran and Iraq, continues to increase its military presence in the region. Strangely enough American fears about the threats posed by Iran and Iraq do not appear to be shared by any of the countries' regional neighbours. Yet America continues to send more troops and equipment and constantly intensifies its search for military facilities and bases.

Surely, if the dividends of peace are ever to be reaped, American military policy must be changed. For the Americans to continue playing the same game—i.e. to continue to up the ante in the Gulf as a means to procure yet more contracts for their own defence industry and encourage the Gulf states in massive military expenditure which they can ill-afford—can only result in instability, which is the antithesis of peace.

At the moment we are caught in a vicious circle. There are attempts to destabilise Gulf regimes, and the only people to benefit from such destabilisation will be Western arms manufacturers. The great casualty, of course, will be a meaningful peace. If we do not break out from this vicious circle, we will be forced to accept that peace is nothing other than a synonym for total Arab surrender.

Egypt: Human Rights Reports Claim Laws, Islamists Restrict Freedom

NC2102163796 Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English 15 Feb p 2

[Report by Dina 'Izzat]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights (EOHR) and the Centre for Human Rights Legal Aid (CHRLA) have warned, in two separate reports issued this week, that freedom of expression and civil liberties have been restricted by both government-imposed constraints and the intellectual terrorism of Islamist militants.

"It is a situation where, on one side, you have the government abusing its right of legislation to pass laws protecting its own interests and the militant Islamists using intellectual terrorism. On the other side, there is a civil society that calls for democracy and tolerance," said Hisham Mubarak, executive director of CHRLA.

Such charges were totally unfounded so far as the government was concerned, insisted Na'ila Jabr, director of the Human Rights Department at the Foreign Ministry. "The concerned NGOs [nongovernmental organization] have the right to examine the issues of concern to civil society, but nobody could claim that the government is curtailing freedom of expression," she said.

Jabr, who had received copies of both CHRLA's and EOHR's reports, added that "from the legal point of view, Egypt is doing everything to honour its commitment to the 18 human rights treaties and declarations of which it is a signatory."

CHRLA's 80-page report, entitled "The Trap," covered a wide range of what it deemed legally sanctioned violations of the freedom of expression. These, according to the report, include Law 93 for 1995, with its harsh penalties for publication offences, and the continued enforcement of the Emergency Law along with other laws such as those dealing with censorship.

The report states that "the government...has further decreased the margin of democracy and political plurality by its adoption of legislative policies curtailing and weakening constitutional and legal guarantees to human rights and fundamental freedoms." The report also attacked the "apostasy campaigns" launched by Islamists against intellectuals, writers and journalists.

The EOHR's report, "Journalists Behind Bars," focused on the impact of Law 93 on journalists and their ability to exercise freedom of expression. The report listed 122 intellectuals and public figures who have been taken to court, either by the government machinery or Islamist activists. Of these, 13 journalists were sentenced to

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imprisonment and fined under Law 93, while 16 others are being investigated or are facing trial, the report said.

Jabr, on the other hand, noted that the government had responded to the concerns of journalists and intellectuals by setting up a committee to draft a new press law to replace Law 93. She also underlined the government's efforts to regulate the right of Al-Hisbah in personal status affairs—a legal licence for any Muslim to file a lawsuit requesting a civil court to divorce couples under the pretext that the husband had renounced Islam. According to a recently approved law, only the prosecutor-general can now initiate an Al-Hisbah lawsuit, after receiving and investigating a complaint from a plaintiff, and deeming that there is a case to answer. This law, Garb said, "is the first achievement of a legislative committee commissioned by the minister of justice to review many laws to ensure that no restrictions, under any pretext, are placed on freedom of expression and to guarantee civil liberties."

On the other side of the political fence, Majdi Hussayn, the chief editor of the Islamist-oriented AL-SHA'B who is himself a victim of Law 93, said that "there is no way the Islamists can be held responsible for restricting the freedom of expression...It is unfair to say that going to court to establish some basic Islamic principles is a violation of the freedom of expression. Why should a magazine be allowed to ridicule prophets and religious people not be allowed to file a lawsuit against the editor?"

Sudan

Sudan: Al-Bashir's Brother Reportedly Killed in Fighting in South

NC2102165596 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 18 Feb 96 p 11

[From the "Brothers' Page" featuring reports and comments on Sudan]

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Uthman al-Bashir, younger brother of Sudanese President 'Umar al-Bashir, has been killed in military operations in south Sudan. Official Sudanese sources confirm that 'Uthman al-Bashir was killed last week in fighting between the [Islamic National] Front's forces and the Sudanese Popular Liberation Army.

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Bahrain

Bahrain: Opposition Figure Discusses Unrest, U.S. 'Allegations'

NC2102162096 Cairo AL-'ARABI in Arabic 19 Feb 96 p 8

[Interview with Bahraini opposition leader 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Nu'aymi by Talal Khalidi in Beirut; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Khalidi] Western media are depicting events in Bahrain as a struggle between the Sunnis and the authority and as part of the Iranian interference in the region. How do you view this description of events?

[Al-Nu'aymi] The United States is making allegations that serve its own interests. Western media are disseminating these allegations. It is important to be aware and not to believe what the U.S. Administration is saying. The events taking place today are not extemporaneous; they are the continuation of a situation that predates the Islamic Revolution in Iran. It is also important not to believe that events in Bahrain concern the Shiites, are a sectarian issue, or are an issue that concerns Iran. We in the democratic movement have another concept of what is happening in Bahrain, one that differs completely from what the authority is saying and the Western media are disseminating.

The events are part of the nation's struggle against the forces of backwardness, tyranny, and hegemony as represented by a ruling family that has no peers except in a very few Arab countries. This family believes that those who live in Bahrain are not human, but are things or a commodity, as expressed by Prime Minister Khalifah Bin-Salman when he said: "The people of Bahrain are like a Persian carpet; the more you tread on it the better it gets."

Events are also a struggle against U.S. imperialism in the region. The United States believes that it is important to tighten its grip over this region due to its important strategic position and its oil wealth. Through this control, it can dominate the whole world, including its allies Europe and Japan or its former enemies, that is, the former Soviet Union. The United States views the region only from the perspectives of the Zionist entity and oil, that is, occupied Palestine and the Gulf.

[Khalidi] What are the roots of the current uprising?

[Al-Nu'aumi] [passage omitted] Following the second Gulf war there was a broad-based popular movement—the constitutional movement. It included all the national and Islamic forces, both Sunnis and Shiites, as well as nationalist elements such as Ba'thists, Nasirites, and the leftist communist forces. The constitutional movement's slogan was the activation of the Constitution and the restoration of parliamentary life. The Islamic movement, which witnessed a renaissance in the early eighties, and the democratic movement reached a formula for coordinating relations. A petition was signed in 1992 and it mainly demanded the restoration of parliamentary life. It was signed by around 300 figures from various trends. Among the most prominent figures who signed it were struggler Shaykh 'Abd-al-Amir al-Jamri, one of the leaders of the Islamic Shiite trend (now detained); Shaykh 'Abd-al-Latif al-Mahmud, one of the struggling leaders of the Sunni Islamic trend; Ahamd al-Shamlan from the democratic trend; and Sa'id al-'Usfur.

[Khalidi] How did the government deal with the petition?

[Al-Nu'aymi] The government launched a campaign of widespread arrests and tried to forestall the democratic movement when the amir announced the formation of a new shura council at the end of 1993. Members of this shura were appointed. Its bylaws said that it is affiliated with the cabinet and its meetings are to be kept secret. Its members were from the Chamber of Commerce. The second objective in appointing this council was to justify U.S. pressure on the United Nations to drop Bahrain from the UN Human Rights Commission's black list.

[Khalidi] What was the effect of this decision on the popular level?

[Al-Nu'aymi] Any plan proposed by the government was bound to cause confusion in the street. But so as not to create a split in the popular position, the constitutional movement halted its campaign against the decision, despite its opposition to this program, which it regarded as futile. We waited a year before the popular consensus resumed its action against the government's decision. In 1994, 15 personalities representing the struggling Shiite trend, the struggling Sunni trend, the democratic trend, and the women's movement met and formulated a new petition in which they expressed the outlines of a national program for the constitutional movement in Bahrain. The petition called for:

1. Activating the Constitution.

2. Restoring parliamentary life.

3. Allowing the deportees to return.

[Khalidi] What possibilities does the popular movement have of achieving its demands and confronting the government's schemes?

[Al-Nu'aymi] The popular movement has broad experience derived from the popular uprisings of 1954, 1956,

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1965, and 1994. It is preparing to continue the uprising, particularly as the demands that have been submitted are legitimate and cannot be ignored. [passage omitted]

Kuwait

Kuwait: Amir Congratulates King Fahd on Resuming Duties

LD2202092296 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0817 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 22 Feb — It was announced officially here today that Kuwaiti Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to Saudi King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, on the occasion of his resumption of his usual activities in the day-to-day running of the country's affairs. [passage omitted]

Qatar

Qatar: Foreign Minister Affirms Outside Involvement in Coup Plot

JN2102165596 Doha Radio Qatar in Arabic 1530 GMT 21 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Excellency Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani, the foreign minister, said that the vile and hostile abortive plot was intended to destabilize the State of Qatar, cause it harm, and sabotage some of its positions. The minister noted that the life of His Highness Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, the beloved amir of the country, was not in danger at any point.

In an exclusive statement to AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE and BBC radio and television, the minister said that the suspects in the abortive plot had revealed important facts and that non-Qatari elements were involved. [passage omitted]

Asked whether mercenaries participated in the conspiracy, His Excellency Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani, the foreign minister, said: There are mercenaries in nearby countries. We are aware of all their schemes. However, neither mercenaries nor anybody else can succeed in the changing the current situation.

His excellency confirmed the Interior Ministry's statement on the existence of foreign support, saying that some states have offered direct and indirect support. He said this support was revealed in the confessions.

On the statements by the former amir, Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani, in the United Arab Emirates [UAE], in which he said that he does not want foreign powers interfering in Qatari domestic affairs, his excellency said: If Shaykh Khalifah had not asked foreign powers to interfere, then why is he talking about this issue? [sentence as heard]

His Excellency Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani said that the assumption of power by His Highness Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, the beloved amir of the country, took place purely out of Qataris' will and with the support of the ruling family and the Qatari people.

On the residence of Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani in the UAE, his excellency the foreign minister said: Our relations with the UAE are strong and close. I hope that Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani will respect his guest status and rules of hospitality in the UAE and will not allow manipulators to take advantage of him morally and financially in something that will not yield any results.

On the events and developments of the abortive, vile attempt, he said: All the initial confessions indicate that the plotters are from outside the team that accompanied Shaykh Khalifah, because that team is limited. However, we hope that these plotters are not from sisterly countries.

On the timing of the failed, vile attempt, his excellency the foreign minister said: We have known about the plot for months. We kept an eye on it, but we wanted to have all the pieces and catch the plotters red-handed before we told our people all the details. He indicated that this is (?the policy of) His Highness Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, the beloved amir of the country. He added: We will conceal nothing from our people. We will tell them all the details when the investigations are complete.

On the escape of some of the plotters, his excellency said that some of the sisterly states to which they escaped have been asked to extradite them to Qatar. He hopes they will be extradited within the framework of our relations with the Gulf Cooperation Council states.

Qatar: Exiled Shaykh Denies Role in Failed Coup Attempt

NC2202085996 Paris AFP in English 0847 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Abu Dhabi, Feb 22 (AFP)— Qatar's exiled ruler denied on Thursday [22 January] he was involved in a failed counter-coup attempt in Doha, saying in a statement to AFP that it was an internal public uprising against the present government.

Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani also accused the leadership of his son amir Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani of turning Qatar into an international

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terrorist centre and criticised the countries which have denounced the coup.

In a written statement sent to AFP from the his current residence in Abu Dhabi, his personal representative Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Hamad Al Thani said he was reacting to Doha's accusations that Shaykh Khalifah was behind the coup bid.

"This accusation is baseless. What happened in Qatar is an internal affair and a public uprising which rejects the existing situation," he said.

"It is a frank and genuine expression of the adherence of Qatari people to their legitimate amir... [ellipsis as received] Shaykh Khalifah."

Qatar: Oman's Foreign Minister Reiterates Support, Condemns 'Plot'

JN2102183596 Doha Radio Qatar in Arabic 1800 GMT 21 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani, the foreign minister, received a telephone call from His Excellency Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, minister of state for foreign affairs in the sisterly Sultanate of Oman. The Omani minister reiterated the support of the Government of the Sultanate of Oman for the State of Qatar and its condemnation of the vile conspiracy to undermine Qatar's security and stability.

Qatar: Doha Radio Reports France's 'Solidarity' With Country

JN2102163996 Doha Radio Qatar in Arabic 1550 GMT 21 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] France has condemned the abortive conspiracy against Qatar, which aimed at undermining the country's security and stability. A statement issued by the French Foreign Ministry spokesman early this morning expresses the French authorities' happiness at the failure of this attempt, which, the spokesman added, his country was informed of. The statement notes that France expresses its solidarity with the authorities of the State of Qatar, a friendly country.

Qatar: Amir Receives Phone Call From Sudanese President

JN2202061896 Doha Radio Qatar in Arabic 0330 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Highness Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, the beloved amir, last night received a phone call from His Excellency Sudanese President 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir. His Excellency President al-Bashir reaffirmed that Sudan — its leadership and people — support Qatar and strongly denounce the criminal attempt to encroach on the security and stability of Qatar and its fraternal people.

Qatar: Papers Urge GCC Moves, Stress Backing for Amir

NC2202100696 Paris AFP in English 0928 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Doha, Feb 22 (AFP)— Qatar on Thursday [22 February] called on the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to unmask a plot against the country as its former amir denied being behind a failed coup against the new ruler, his son.

"If the Gulf Cooperation Council wants to maintain its role as a meeting point and is concerned about its members, it must act urgently to unmask the plot against our country and choose between regional security or instability," the daily AL-WATAN wrote. [passage omitted]

The daily AL-SHARQ also stressed that the Qatari people were united behind the amir, who seized power from his father in a bloodless coup in June when Shaykh Khalifah was abroad.

"Qatar has chosen its way and will not stand by in face of attempts at subversion," the daily AL-RAYAH, which is close to the amir, wrote.

"The Qatari people is united around his leadership and is ready to resist any plots." [passage omitted]

Qatar: Tribes, Papers Underline Support for Amir

JN2202112896 Doha Radio Qatar in Arabic 1030 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Qatari newspapers today were filled with statements by tribes and families of the faithful Qatari people reconfirming their allegiance and loyalty to His Highness Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, the beloved amir, and strongly denouncing the vile, abortive plot to undermine security and stability in the country.

Newspapers were graced with pictures of his highness the beloved amir and filled with statements supporting his highness the amir and denouncing the vile plot.

Newspapers also published articles by journalists and letters from citizens confirming the Qatari people's support for the wise policy of His Highness Shaykh Ha Mad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, rallying behind his noble positions, and rejecting the base plot against the country's security and against its beloved amir.

The papers' banner headlines expressed the Qatari people's sincere feelings of support for the leader amir

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in the march of fortune, construction, security, stability, and progress. They also reflected the feelings of the faithful people, who beseeched God Almighty to protect his highness and the dear homeland from any harm.

These headlines included: "God Protect Qatar, its Amir and People;" "God Save Qatar;" "We Reaffirm Allegiance and Loyalty;" "God Save Our Amir;" "We Rally Behind the Leader of the March, Reaffirming Allegiance and Supporting His Moves for the Good, Stability, and Security of the Homeland;" and "God Protect Our Dear Homeland From Every Harm."

The newspapers issued special supplements containing statements by tribes, families, businessmen, and companies expressing sincere support for the beloved amir.

In their editorials today, the Qatari newspapers praised the Qatari people's rallying behind their leadership in the face of the abortive plot. They welcomed the major influential world powers' denunciation of what happened and the support they expressed for the Qatari leadership.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Resumes Duties, Exchanges Letters With 'Abdallah

LD2102235596 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2220 GMT 21 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jeddah, 21 Feb — King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al- 'Aziz Al Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy mosques, has sent the following letter to HRH Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the crown prince:

Number 199/A, dated 21 February, 1996

Your Royal Highness dear brother Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, crown prince, may God protect you; God's peace, mercy, and blessing upon you;

After spending a period of rest and convalescence, after God granted us recovery and health and after the expiry of our decree sent to your highness with the number 112/A dated 1 January 1996, I am sending to your highness my fraternal thanks and appreciation, and my gratitude for your self-sacrifice and the sincere efforts you made when you were in charge of the state's affairs.

There is no doubt, dear brother, that this is what we have been accustomed to with your highness, for you have always been our right hand in attending to everything that realizes the general interest of our country and dear people.

We beseech God Almighty to give us all His help and assistance in order to serve our true religion and then serve our brethren and our children the citizens and achieve what we all aspire to, namely strengthening the development process and increasing the prosperity and wealth of our country and honorable citizens.

We also beseech God Almighty to perpetuate the boon of security and stability in our country under the protection of our Islamic faith; He is the one who hears everything and grants all requests.

God's peace, mercy, and blessing upon you.

[Signed] Your brother, Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud

The custodian of the two holy mosques has received the following reply from HRH Crown Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz:

Date: 21 February, 1996

My Lord the custodian of the two holy mosques, my dear brother Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, prayers and God's mercy and blessings be upon you, but to proceed:

On this blessed day I have received your kind letter Number 199/A dated 21 February, which informed me of the end of the period of your rest and convalescence, after God has bestowed on you recovery and good health, and the end of the term of your noble order addressed to us under number 112/A dated 1 January. God only knows, my Lord, the sentiments I felt and the pain at what has befallen my brother for him to ask me to undertake the burdens of running the state — that was a day whose pains I shall never forget, and which I expressed in my letter to my brother then, dated 2 January when I said: "Nothing personally pleases me and fills my heart with happiness and joy more than to see you return to your great role in leading our march." This was the blessed day on which our hopes and prayers were surrounding you.

As a matter of fact, I would like to truthfully tell you that the circumstances of the short period in which I lived with what you charged me with did not allow me to do anything worth mentioning, but what I closely felt and became aware of during that short period of time coupled with the great responsibility is what I pray Almighty God to assist you on and render you successful in doing.

I would like to reaffirm to you at the end of this sincere letter that I, with all the loyalty and faithfulness, understand that I should obey God and His righteous religion, the homeland, and you in everything that serves the public interest and realizes for this people its hopes and aspirations, and pray to Almighty God to grant you long life in order to continue your historic role vis-a-vis the estrangement created by events between a person

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and his brother in the Arab and Islamic homelands. This is what I would like to reaffirm to you, my Lord, and be committed to during the remainder of my life. The final word has always been and will always be for Almighty God.

May God look over you and keep you and support you with victory. Peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you.

[Signed] Your brother, 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz

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Iraq: 'Udayy Heads Delegation To Receive Husayn Kamil

MM2202113596 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 22 Feb 96 pp 1, 6

[Report by Salamah Ni'mat: "'Udayy Received Husayn Kamil"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Amman — Reliable Jordanian and Iraqi sources confirmed yesterday that 'Udayy Saddam Husayn — the Iraqi president's eldest son, who some people believe was the main cause of the defection to Jordan last August of General Husayn Kamil, his brother Saddam, and their families — was at the head of the Iraqi delegation that received the returnees on their entry into Iraqi territory from Jordan the day before yesterday.

The sources revealed that the Iraqi president's son-in-law, whom — together with his brother — the Iraqi authorities allowed to return to Baghdad following the pardon issued by the Revolution Command Council and the ruling party's Regional Command, decided to appeal for amnesty after failing to obtain asylum in Syria or a European state and to polarize any of the Iraqi opposition leaders abroad.

The sources said that the Syrian leadership had agreed recently to allow the former military industrialization minister, his brother, and their families to move to Syria, but King Husayn's refusal to allow Husayn Kamil and Saddam to take their wives with them outside Jordan thwarted the plan. The sources said that King Husayn told Husayn Kamil via a third party that the Iraqi president's daughters, Raghd and Rana, would remain in his care unless they decided to return to Baghdad. The plan for Husayn Kamil to move to a European state that had promised to consider his application for an entry visa was also thwarted. The sources said that the state in question informed him two weeks ago of its refusal to grant him an entry visa.

Informed sources have said that some of Husayn Kamil's aides refused to return with him to Baghdad, in fear for their lives. It is not known whether Husayn Kamil's brother-in-law — his first name is 'Izz-al-Din, and he was outside Jordan when the decision to return was taken — will join his family later.

The sources say that Husayn Kamil felt very isolated because of his failure to get any other country to grant him asylum, and also because there is near-unanimity among Iraqi opposition circles not to deal with him because he is part of the regime and responsible for carrying out the ugliest and bloodiest repressive operations against the Iraqi people. Husayn Kamil's fears increased after U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry's announcement of the existence of a plan to topple the Iraqi regime in coordination with Jordan and other states in the region.

The sources pointed out that Husayn Kamil's fears in this context are attributable to his concern that Jordan could at a certain stage submit to the pressure exerted by the Iraqi opposition and some Western states for Husayn Kamil to stand trial for what are considered "crimes" against the Iraqi people. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, Iraqi sources in Amman have said that the "protection teams" allocated to senior Iraqi officials [in Iraq] have been replaced. The sources said that the new teams come from the special security forces headed by Qusayy, the Iraqi president's youngest son.

The Iraqi sources spoke of reports of the arrest of Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz' son, Ziyad, in the context of "settling scores" between 'Udayy and Tariq 'Aziz.

As is known, 'Udayy hates Tariq 'Aziz very much, and he managed to put 'Aziz' son in prison after circulating reports that Ziyad Tariq 'Aziz had become a businessman and was exploiting his father's influence. He also imprisoned members of Tariq 'Aziz' protection team on the pretext that they exploited their status to smuggle food and goods across the border. [passage omitted]

Iraq: Former Tikrit Governor Said Go-Between for Husayn Kamil

MM2202113996 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 22 Feb 96 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Former Tikrit Governor Brought 'Safe Conduct' for Husayn Kamil From Saddam"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-HAYAH — A well-informed source in London told AL-HAYAH yesterday that the envoy who informed Husayn Kamil of President Saddam Husayn's amnesty was Shaykh 'Iyadah al-Sudayd, a Shammari [from Shammar] and a former governor of Tikrit, who is close to the ruling family.

The source added that al-Sudayd had traveled to Iraq about two weeks ago and returned to Amman a few days ago to tell Husayn Kamil that he had "brought him safe conduct" from Saddam.

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Iraq: Iraqi National Congress Shuns Defector Husayn Kamil Hasan

JN2202071896 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0600 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Iraqi National Congress [INC], an opposition movement in exile, announced that it was not possible to cooperate with General Husayn Kamil Hasan, Iraqi President Saddam Husayn's son-in-law, who returned to Baghdad last Tuesday after he defected to Amman for approximately six and a half months.

Despite this, the INC admitted that Husayn Kamil Hasan's defection had caused great damage to the Iraqi leadership, noting the exiting conflicts inside this leadership. The INC said that the possibility of considering Husayn Kamil Hasan as an opposition figure was rejected by all Iraqi opposition movements that defend pluralism, democracy, and respect for human rights.

Ahmad al-Jalabi, president of the INC Executive Council, said that Husayn Kamil Hasan's return to Baghdad absolutely proves that he cannot make the transition from a loyal servant of the regime to an opposition activist.

Iraq: Opposition Leader Interviewed on Husayn Kamil's Return

NC2102201096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 21 Feb 96

[Telephone interview with Wafiq al-Samarra'i, leader of the Iraqi National Movement and former chief of Iraqi military intelligence, by correspondent Mahdi Hasan; place and date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Hasan] Mr. Wafiq al-Samarra'i, as you know, Husayn Kamil, the Iraqi president's son-in-law, has returned to Baghdad. Can you comment on this development?

[Al-Samarra'i] First of all, I welcome you and I thank you for this interview. The case of Husayn Kamil is clear. He defected to Jordan as a result of family differences within the regime and because he was afraid of the future and the fate awaiting him. Regrettably, he utterly failed to present himself to the opposition and to regional states in a correct way. We had hoped that he would display a correct and positive manner. Hence, he suffered a lot of frustration. He failed to gain the confidence of the neighboring states and he was not received by any Arab or Islamic states. He also failed to win the confidence of the Iraqi opposition.

Recently, sharp differences arose between him and Jordan and between him and all the opposition factions. He expected that oil would be exported to buy food and medicine. He imagined that the regime's situation would improve. The Iraqi National Accord Movement recently opened a regional office in Amman. All these factors strongly influenced him. His presence in Amman became impossible and he decided to return to hell.

[Hasan] Mr. al-Samarra'i, some observers say Husayn Kamil's defection and then his return to Iraq was a put-up job by him and the Iraqi Government to achieve two objectives—infiltrating the Iraqi opposition and justifying giving information to the United Nations on arms.

[Al-Samarra'i] As you know, we always think as intelligence officials because of our jobs, in addition to our political leanings. I do not find this scenario convincing. Therefore, I completely rule out—and as we heard yesterday, the U.S. Department also rules out—that Husayn Kamil defected to Jordan in accordance with a plan of Saddam.

Regarding infiltration of the Iraqi opposition, it is difficult to infiltrate it. Husayn Kamil contacted several factions and elements, including myself. He did not meet me, but he contacted me by phone several times. He was not able to obtain from us one piece of information about our situation inside Iraq. This applies to the other Iraqi factions, which doubt him and his credibility. He did not succeed in infiltrating the opposition or obtaining information about the situation in Iraq. Some opposition factions told him they were ready to cooperate with him if he had a serious plan to overthrow Saddam. This is general talk from which he could not benefit at all. He knows nothing about our contacts with the opposition inside the country. Our brother mujahidin inside must rest completely assured about this. Regarding the fact that he got acquainted with opposition leaders outside Iraq, this was done in public and not in secret.

Regarding arms, Saddam could have sacrificed an officer with the rank of brigadier general, major general, or director general, blamed him for everything, and cut off his head. It is illogical that he would authorize the persons closest to him in the regime after Qusayy to perform this task, which entails moral, security, and political risks. If Saddam had agreed with them, it is impossible Kamil and the others would be returning to office and to their leading posts. Therefore, he lost them and they lost themselves.

From an intelligence point of view, I rule out this scenario, of casting doubt on his defection. He defected and failed. This leads us to one main conclusion, namely that Saddam's regime is not accepted by the people. Even those who rebel against the regime from within

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the ruling family and are prepared to work with the people to overthrow Saddam are not accepted.

Iraq: Opposition Radio Cited on Husayn Kamil's Return to Baghdad

JN2102203796 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1845 GMT 21 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Because Husayn Kamil, the tyrant's son-in-law, failed to obscure his crimes before the Iraqi people and opposition, he returned miserably to Baghdad on the afternoon of 20 February.

Press sources in Amman said that the tyrant's ambassador in Amman accompanied Husayn Kamil to the Jordanian-Iraqi border. Meanwhile, other sources indicated that the tyrant sent some regime officials to welcome his two son-in-laws and two daughters after they crossed the country's western border.

The ASSOCIATED PRESS said that the Iraqi opposition completely ignored Husayn Kamil, who failed to camouflage his crimes. He failed to improve his image, which has always been associated with crimes, particularly against families in central and southern Iraq.

Other media sources quoted Saddam's son-in-law as saying he was in constant touch with the Baghdad government during his six-month seclusion in Amman and denying that there is a quarrel between him and his despotic father-in-law.

It is worth noting that Staff Brigadier General Shabib Salman Majid al-Tikriti, a cousin of Saddam's, said that Saddam personally planned Husayn Kamil's flight to Amman, which was only temporary. The general made this statement when Husayn Kamil fled to Amman.

Iraq: Paper Reports on Husayn Kamil Pre-Return Interview

JN2102212896 Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 5 Jan 96 pp 18-19

[Report on interview with Iraqi General Husayn Kamil Hasan by Walid Abu-Zahr in Amman "a few weeks ago" : "Would Husayn Kamil Return to Baghdad?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Suddenly, General Husayn Kamil's telephone died and the residence of the Iraqi president's son-in-law stopped answering the calls that increased last week with the rise in talk about the imminent convening of an Iraqi opposition conference in the Jordanian capital, Amman. At the conference, the Iraqi opposition would hold serious discussions on the future of Iraq and formulate a working political plan to change the Iraqi regime.

What prompted so many questions was the fact that the people promoting the Amman conference reaffirmed that the conference would discuss King Husayn's plan to generate change in Iraq by setting up a federation with an ethnic and factional basis — Shiite-Sunni-Kurdish. Some went beyond this and added to the plan the unification of Jordan and Iraq in a confederation led by the Jordanian monarch himself. Some even said that the Jordanian monarch wants to use this plan to name his chief chamberlain, [Prince] Ra'd Bin-Zayd, king of Iraq.

Amid these developments, Husayn Kamil broke his silence on the Jordanian plan and made a statement in which he denounced the call for establishing a federation in Iraq. He considered it a form of partition, while King Husayn considered the federation plan an initiative to avoid fragmentation in Iraq and unite it in a way that would be similar to the American federal system.

Regardless of the real objectives of the Iraqi federation plan, this plan has undoubtedly placed the Iraqi president's son-in-law at a real impasse. It has caused him to stay of sight, particularly since he also declared at the same time his reservations about the participation of the Iraqi opposition factions, which he described as Iranian, in the Amman conference.

In a lengthy interview in Amman a few weeks ago, the Iraqi president's son-in-law appeared to be concerned about abiding by the firm principles that prompted him to leave Iraq and join the opposition. Husayn Kamil, his brother Saddam Kamil, and Major General 'Izz-al-Din [not further identified] were determined not to relinquish these principled stands. The first and most basic point of these stands is maintaining Iraq's unity and rejecting any form of federation, because they are convinced that it will result in the division and fragmentation of Iraq.

It seems that Syria was reluctant to deal with Husayn Kamil because Syrian officials feared that he was implementing a divisive plan, but the Iraqi president's son-in-law emphasized Iraq's unity and the need to unite the opposition as part of the Higher Council for Salvation. Husayn Kamil did not conceal the difficulty of reconciling the Iraqi opposition wings, currents, and personalities with suspicious affiliations and divisive trends. He believes that a successful change in Iraq will depend on having consensus on two basic points: a commitment to Iraq's unity and the effort to activate the scattered and divided opposition, close its ranks, and unite it under one plan and one leader, Husayn Kamil. He believes he will become the leader of the opposition because of his detailed knowledge of the regime and its internal capabilities, particularly since all the previous

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leaders of the opposition proved to be failures and lost their credibility.

We asked Husayn Kamil to hypothetically describe what he would do if he fails to organize and unite the opposition and agree on a unified program for change in Iraq amid the intertwined interests of domestic, regional, and international powers related to the country's future. The Iraqi president's son- in-law became nervous and answered with a frown: "I will not join plans to partition Iraq. I will not work for this or that state. I defected with a plan to change the regime and save Iraq from partition and fragmentation. I would much rather return to Iraq and tell Saddam Husayn: Execute me if I have worked against the good and the unity of Iraq. Then, I will understand that nobody wants to change the regime in Iraq, neither the big nor the small powers, not even the opposition."

I emerged from the interview with a question in my mind: What if Husayn Kamil finds himself at a dead end? Will he return to Iraq, knowing better than anybody else the destiny that awaits him?

This question seems to be more justifiable now than ever before. About four months after his defection, nothing indicates that the Iraqi president's son-in-law has begun to overcome the obstacles that face him and the intrigues that are being hatched against him. He has not even lifted the atmosphere of caution and reservations that has emerged since he arrived in Jordan. Although some news reports talked about U.S. or British roles in the defection of Husayn Kamil from Baghdad, nothing has surfaced from Washington, London, or any other Western capital to indicate that they have responded to the envoys of Saddam Husayn's son-in-law or that they have decided to join him in a serious plan to change the regime in Iraq and rally a unified Iraqi opposition group capable of making the change.

The indications from the Arab states that oppose Iraq and call for changing the regime were no better than those received from the Western states. At best, Husayn Kamil's envoys returned with signs of good intentions and promises to look into the case.

Within the opposition, the stands varied. Some groups welcomed him immediately. Either they viewed his defection as an opportunity to change the Iraqi regime through a personality that used to be inside the regime and capable of penetrating its agencies and institutions, or they viewed Husayn Kamil as the best available option compared with other oppositionists who lost their credibility and failed to reach an agreement on minimum common denominators, or both. Among this team were many independent oppositionists who refused to join existing opposition trends. Other opposition trends launched a hostile campaign against Husayn Kamil. Most of them proceeded from the religious or regional links of their leaders, some of whom Husayn Kamil had refused to deal with and had accused of seeking to implement schemes to partition Iraq or of working for foreign states or strictly personal interests.

Nevertheless, Husayn Kamil intensified his contacts with the foreign opposition forces, seeking to unify them around common denominators and stands based on changes that would maintain Iraq's unity. Over the past few months, it seemed like Jordan, which had played a role in convincing Husayn Kamil to leave Iraq since his treatment in an Amman hospital and then offered to sponsor him and grant him and his group asylum, was proceeding along the lines of favoring a change in Iraq and supporting Husayn Kamil. Indeed, Jordanian officials gave Husayn Kamil special status and made intensive efforts to reach an agreement or an understanding between him and the opposition Iraqi trends, especially those based in London.

After King Husayn launched his plan for an Iraqi federation, Husayn Kamil was been careful not to criticize it, even though he was not convinced of it. At the same time, he continued to completely ignore the proposals by the rest of the opposition. He stressed his determination to carry out his idea of a salvation council, but did not try to block the possible success of the Jordanian effort to reconcile the Iraqi opposition. Until last week, some sources were still saying that the Iraqi opposition conference in Amman would focus on reconciliation between the plans of Husayn Kamil and those who oppose him. However, the surprise came when the Iraqi president's son-in-law publicly criticized the federation plan and implied that he would not participate in the opposition conference.

Jordanian sources acknowledge that Husayn Kamil's stand took Amman by surprise. Some fear that this could affect the Jordanian position toward the president's son-in-law. Some quarters believe that Husayn Kamil's recent silence is required at this critical phase in the efforts to bring about change in Iraq. They do not rule out the possibility that he might have chosen to wait and remove himself from the limelight for the time being, pending the crystallization of a united stand by the Iraqi opposition at the Amman conference. They believe that King Husayn, who has decided to spearhead change in Iraq, wants Husayn Kamil to hold a significant post in a future Iraqi administration, particularly since he has personally been Husayn Kamil's guardian since his defection to Jordan. The king established ties with the general that he could use to create a substitute to the Iraqi regime.

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Other sources in the Iraqi opposition who have been very close to Husayn Kamil in recent months and who know about his plans and psychological state believe that the general suddenly found himself in a real dilemma in the face of accelerating developments on the regional and international scenes. These sources think Husayn Kamil's reading of events and developments since his arrival in Jordan caused him to conclude that the Iraqi question has taken on a regional dimension beyond the control of the Iraqi opposition, which renders its ability to bring about change in Iraq irrelevant. Consequently, the task of bringing about change in Iraq was assigned to King Husayn, who was given the go-ahead to carry out this assignment by the Americans and world powers. According to these sources, Husayn Kamil came to the conclusion last week that the schemes hatched for Iraq go beyond the wishes of the Iraqi opposition and his own personal wishes. He realized that the opposition might find itself compelled to get involved in the regional and international game as "pawns" or tools. He feared that the opposition's influence in such a game would be insignificant.

These sources think that this new reading of developments aggravated Husayn Kamil's obsessions. In recent months, he came to believe that the weak and fragmented opposition, which is being used by parties that want to partition Iraq, is not the only obstacle to change in Iraq. He came to believe that the big powers are acting like they do not want to topple Saddam Husayn. In recent weeks, Saddam's son-in-law became hostage to the obsession that there may be a grand scheme to partition Iraq and institute federal rule there. The question is: Will Husayn Kamil choose to return to Iraq and face execution or, at best, imprisonment, if Saddam chooses to show clemency toward his son-in-law? It goes without saying that Saddam Kamil will do whatever his brother Husayn Kamil chooses to do.

What is certain is that Husayn Kamil has not ruled out returning to Iraq, but he will certainly wait for a clearer picture of the schemes planned for the country. He wants to see whether change, or the lack of it, will exclude him or compel him to remain uninvolved. Once this happens, he will make his decision.

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Israel: Agreement Reached With 'Arafat To Put Off Final Stage Talks

TA2102182896 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 21 Feb 96

[Studio talk between political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen and anchor Micky Haimowitz — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Haimowitz] We open with a report on the decision to put off the negotiations with the Palestinians on the permanent arrangement until after the elections. Our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen joins us in the newsroom. Good evening to you, 'Imanu'el.

[Rosen] Good evening.

[Haimowitz] Would it be right to say that the Palestinians were party to this decision?

[Rosen] Yes, they were definitely party to it. The move was coordinated at the highest levels by Prime Minister Peres and Palestinian Authority leader 'Arafat. Indeed, both the Palestinians and the Israelis wanted it and agreed during the past 24 hours to put off the beginning of the negotiations on the permanent arrangement.

[Haimowitz] So the Palestinians are becoming an active factor in our election campaign.

[Rosen] Yes, that is correct, because the consideration behind this decision is undoubtedly political and is related to the elections. The Labor government, under Peres, does not want the negotiations on the permanent arrangement to start one or two weeks before the elections, thus giving the Likud exceptional propaganda material from its point of view.

[Haimowitz] What exactly does Labor fear?

[Rosen] The negotiations were scheduled to start on 4 May, a few days before the elections on 29 May. There are many things to fear. The issues are very weighty, as you can see by the list on the screen: the status of Jerusalem; the right of return of the refugees; the fate of the settlements; the nature of the Palestinian rule — that is, the establishment of a Palestinian state; and the permanent borders — all the issues that the Peres government does not want to put on the agenda a few days before the elections.

[Haimowitz] Have you managed to collect any reactions to this report?

[Rosen] Yes, we have the reaction of the Likud chairman, who says that Labor's attempt to put off the debate on Jerusalem until after the elections is further proof that the government promised 'Arafat to make concessions in Jerusalem and is now trying to conceal this from the Israeli public. We hope to bring Prime Minister Peres' reaction later on in our program. We do not have it yet.

[Haimowitz] We will report it as soon as we get it, of course. Thank you very much.

[At 1820 GMT, Haimowitz reports that "the prime minister's bureau has announced that this is yet another act in the Likud theater of tall tales designed to delude the public. Our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen nevertheless points out that this evening, a high-level political source directly involved in the negotiations confirmed our report."]

Israel: Accord on Palestinian State Reported; Talks Delay Denied

TA2202070196 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 22 Feb 96 p A1

[Report by Ze'ev Schiff and Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 1 November 1995, three days before the assassination of Yitzhaq Rabin, long and secret negotiations were concluded in a joint document on the permanent solution between Israel and the Palestinian Authority [PA]. The Israeli negotiating team was headed by Minister Yosi Beilin and Mahmud 'Abbas [Abu-Mazin] headed the PA team. According to what HA'ARETZ has learned, the document also includes a map of the borders. The document and the map were presented to Prime Minister Shim'on Peres and PA President Yasir 'Arafat. The latter knew about the negotiations all along.

Peres rejected the agreement for three main reasons: He opposes handing over to the Palestinians the Jordan Rift Valley in 12 years, as the negotiators agreed. He does not favor a solution that does not specify a linkage between Jordan and the Palestinians. Also, he believes that, from Israel's point of view, the problem of Jerusalem has not been settled.

The document of understanding includes a series of principles, such as: Israel will agree to the establishment of a Palestinian state; an extraterritorial traffic corridor will establish territorial contact between the two parts of Palestine — the Gaza Strip and the West Bank; no Israeli settlements will be uprooted, and most of the settlers will live in areas that will be under Israeli sovereignty; the Muslim holy places on the Temple Mount (Haram al-Sharif) will be declared extraterritorial.

When asked about the nature of the negotiations and the document attained, Minister Beilin told HA'ARETZ: "The offers — which were drafted with the involvement of Prof. Ya'ir Hirschfeld, Dr. Ron Pundaq, and others — are not to be seen as a signed agreement or an Israeli

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commitment. At the same time, based on these ideas, we will be able to enter the negotiations on the permanent agreement with more information and understanding, as well as a sense of security, which would improve the chances of attaining an agreement with the Palestinians."

"Among other things," Beilin added, "the talks have given me an opportunity to state that most of the settlers will live in areas under Israeli sovereignty; that no settlements will be uprooted; that Jerusalem will not be divided; and that the Palestinians will have no right to return to sovereign Israeli territory."

According to him, "ever since the Oslo agreements were signed, I have been talking with Palestinian leaders and learning about their red lines and issues that could serve as common ground for the negotiations on the permanent arrangement. Written and oral ideas were raised during this period, and there are others. For example, there are the ideas drafted by Dr. Yosi Alpher at the time when he worked for the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies in the Tel Aviv University, or the ideas of the Jerusalem Research Institute."

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0600 GMT on 22 February adds that "Minister Yosi Beilin denied the report in this morning's HA'ARETZ that he and Abu-Mazin had formulated a joint document on the permanent settlement, including an agreement to set up a Palestinian state. Minister Beilin told Qol Yisra'el this morning: There is no agreement, there is no paper, and there were no negotiations on the permanent settlement. Minister Beilin, nevertheless, made it clear that the spirit of the report is correct because in the talks he is conducting with the Palestinian leadership, the possibility of reaching a reasonable arrangement to the satisfaction of both sides is emerging. There is a Palestinian readiness for a confederation between Jordan and a Palestinian entity, which is not a state and does not have an army. There is an understanding that there is no need to uproot settlements, that most settlers will remain under Israeli sovereignty, and that Jerusalem will not be divided. Minister Beilin stressed that it is clear to all that Israel will not give up its sovereignty over Jerusalem, including the Islamic holy places."]

Aluf Ben reports: Channel 2 Television last night reported that Prime Minister Peres has reached an agreement with Yasir 'Arafat, according to which the talks on the permanent arrangements would be postponed until after the elections in Israel. This is a departure from the target date, set for 4 May, two years after signing the Gaza and Jericho agreement in Cairo.

The prime minister's bureau denied the report, saying: "No agreement to delay the permanent arrangement talks has been made, and the prime minister asked nothing of 'Arafat." The office of Uri Savir, coordinator of the peace negotiations, stated that the report is wrong and that, at best, there is a thought that the talks on the permanent arrangement may be delayed, but no agreement has been made.

Peres held a meeting yesterday on ideas to bolster and develop Jerusalem that were presented by former Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek. The meeting was attended by the ministers of finance, interior, construction and housing, and justice. Kollek spoke of the housing problems of secular and ultra-Orthodox Jews, and of the need to expand investments and factories and to create jobs in the city.

Israel: Likud Reacts to Report on Beilin-'Abbas Talks

TA2202101996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] The Likud Knesset faction said that Minister Yosi Beilin's talks with Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] prove that the Oslo agreement is leading to a withdrawal to the 1967 borders.

Knesset Member Beni Begin told our correspondent Hayim Hecht that it is obvious from the talks that Israel has already agreed to give up the Jordan Rift Valley even before negotiations on the permanent settlement start.

Israel: Paper Critical of Government's 'Evasiveness' on Jerusalem Issue

TA2102145896 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 21 Feb 96 p 6

[Editorial: "The Orient House Dilemma"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The government's denials of Likud charges on the issue of Jerusalem have been uncommonly vehement. But the announcement by Internal Security Minister Moshe Shahal that foreign officials would be barred from Orient House, and foreign ministry pleas to foreign officials to avoid visits to Israel in the next three months indicate that the charges have hit a raw nerve.

Perhaps most disturbing is the evasiveness and disingenuousness with which ministers are responding to the Likud's accusations. Prime Minister Shim'on Peres has asserted that the government cannot prevent foreigners from making social calls on Jerusalem residents. Faysal al-Husayni, he said, is not a member of the Palestinian Authority's [PA] cabinet, and as a plain resident he cannot be told not to accept visitors.

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But neither the foreign dignitaries nor al-Husayni himself make a secret of the official character of the visits and the nature of the talks. Al-Husayni may not have the title of the PA's foreign minister, but he serves as one. And it insults the intelligence of the public to imply that prominent statesmen make the trek to Orient House to discuss the weather.

Just as insulting is the notion that Shahal would station Israeli police outside Orient House's gates to prevent, say, Germany's foreign minister or Turkey's president from entering. Neither the government nor the opposition would want such an international incident to occur, nor does anyone believe it will. In fact, when asked if the ministry intends to take action to prevent foreign ministers from visiting Orient House, the ministry's spokeswoman said "I don't believe so." That Shahal could therefore make the suggestion only indicates that the effects of election fever are more deleterious than hitherto realized.

Nor does it add to Israel's standing to suggest that foreign visits stop for the duration of the election campaign. In effect, it is a request to foreign governments to help Labor in the elections by sparing it political embarrassment. No one doubts that if Labor wins, Orient House will continue functioning at least in its present role, despite the violation of the Oslo-Cairo accords this role constitutes. To remove its activities from public scrutiny for three months is nothing less than a concealment of the truth.

The government also maintains that the Likud government, too, allowed Orient House to function as a Palestinian headquarters before June 1992. As one minister put it, "What was good enough for Shamir is good enough for us." But there was no Oslo agreement in force during the Likud rule, nor a Palestinian Authority ruling in Gaza, Jericho and all the Arab cities of Judaea and Samaria. The role of Orient House today is to extend the Palestinian Authority's rule to Jerusalem, a role it could not play when no such rule existed.

The government can, of course, deal a lethal blow to the Likud charges. All it has to do is close Orient House. As Mayor Ehud Olmert has said, such a move will not affect the talks with the Palestinian Authority. It will only show that the government is serious in denying intentions to divide Jerusalem.

Israel: 'Secret' Blueprint for Metropolitan Jerusalem

TA2102161396 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 21 Feb 96 pp A1, A2

[Report by Nadav Shragay]

[FBIS Translated Text] An interministerial team of experts appointed by the government to draft a blueprint and development plan for a Jerusalem metropolis proposes to set up a special administrative system in the city and its environs "which could be used as a lever for the promotion of political arrangements," in addition to its role in improving services to the Jewish and Arab populations. The team notes that this administrative system would "blur the question of sovereignty and political conflicts over power control." HA'ARETZ obtained the team's 250-page secret report, of which very few copies were printed, which was recently submitted to the government.

The team built a model, dubbed "hierarchical jurisdiction," where several types of administrative units would operate in conjunction: submunicipal units in the form of urban administrations; municipal units in the form of local authorities; submetropolitan units in the form of regional associations, such as unions of town councils or adjacent villages; and above all of them, a general roof metropolitan administration. According to the proposal, the system would operate "above any political borders" in the area between Ramallah in the north, the 'Etzyon Bloc in the south, Ma'ale Adumim in the east, and Bet Shemesh in the west.

The planning and research team, headed by Shemaryahu Kohen and Adam Mazor, was appointed back in the time of the Likud government to plan a Jerusalem metropolis, and its members were asked to go ahead with their work after Labor rose to power. The steering committee and its executive consisted of professionals from the Jerusalem Municipality, the Housing Ministry, the Interior Ministry, the Israel Land Administration, and the Civil Administration. The think tank overseeing the work included Professor Yehoshu'a Ben-Arye, Reserves General Shlomo Gazit, Prof. Rut Lapidot, and former Foreign Ministry Director General Re'uven Merhav.

The team stresses that the plan did not set out to demarcate borders. It proposes "to reorganize services and layouts along professional and practical lines in a bid to improve the standard of living of all populations." The team writes that although the demarcation of the border around Jerusalem could change, the metropolitan plan would remain the same "with only the substance and scope of cooperation changing."

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The report goes on to say that in the event of a rigid border, where cooperation will not transcend political frontiers, Jerusalem would go back to being a "border town." "A return to the previous situation, regardless of whatever border alterations are made, would be destructive from the Jerusalem point of view for both sides."

The blueprint notes that "the administrative approach is not meant to replace the political approach but is designed to present an array of pragmatic solutions which could be used later on in the permanent arrangements."

Under the headline "The City's Sanctity," the report notes, among other things: "Within Jerusalem, the hierarchy will not only deal with needs and functions but also with the religious-symbolic layout, distinguishing between levels of sanctity and secularity in the region. Jerusalem's city limits expanded in the last 100 years, and today the city includes housing projects, bedroom communities, new suburbs, and Arab villages which have no unique or sacred quality and which were never part of Jerusalem. Above all this lie the city's municipal boundaries, which do not distinguish between religious, historical, and symbolic values.

"The municipal boundaries are the result of political decisions to geographically stretch the term Jerusalem, with this expansion itself giving the new areas a new aura.... In other words, Jerusalem is a symbol that transcends geographical-political expansion. The proposed approach, using the necessary caution, is supposed to shrink the term to its true geographical-historical dimensions: a core sacred to the three faiths, a less sacred region adjacent to the core, and a secular region.

"Such definitions will also facilitate the negotiations in the future on the specific location of the national installations and symbols. This will call for agreement to tone down the political infiltration of the holy places and to divert the creation of national symbols to more secular and less controversial areas."

According to the team's recommendations, "the proposed deployment of administrative systems and services would enable a hierarchical distribution of sovereignty. Instead of sovereignty remaining an absolute term at the top of the ruling pyramid, the proposed model would enable the distribution of sovereignty among the components of the geographical hierarchy.

"Decisions about education, welfare, and planning would be made by an array of organizations at various levels of the geographical hierarchy. The distribution of tax collection and deployment of police troops could also be envisioned as part of this arrangement. This would blur the sovereignty issue and the political conflicts concerning power control."

Other recommendations made by the team are:

— Creating a clear contiguity to the Jewish and Arab populations, trying to prevent enclaves of one population inside the other, and reducing the possibilities for proximity and friction between the two.

— Linking Ma'ale Adumim, Giv'at Ze'ev, the 'Etzyon Bloc, and Betar to Jerusalem.

— Locating metropolitan functions shared by all populations.

— As for an administrative and governing complex for the Palestinian population, "preference should be given to a location in the northern part of the metropolis."

Israel: Peres Denies Plans To Reorganize Jerusalem

TA2102164296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1500 GMT 21 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres says Jerusalem will remain a united city. He was speaking to journalists at al-Nabi Samu'il, overlooking the capital. Efrayim Gefen reports:

[Begin recording] [Gefen] The prime minister came to this hill with a panoramic view of Jerusalem and the countryside north of the city accompanied by Public Security Minister Moshe Shahal, other officials, and senior army officers. Shim'on Peres climbed to the roof of the al-Nabi Samu'il building and was given a bird's-eye view of the area. Coming down from the building, which houses a synagogue and a mosque, Peres answered questions on Jerusalem and other topics.

[Peres] We don't have any plans to reorganize Jerusalem, clearly not to divide it. Jerusalem will not become a Berlin, and we shall not permit any walls in her heart. Jerusalem will remain a united city, the capital of Israel. When it comes to the municipal administration: If the mayor of Jerusalem, Mr. Ehud Olmert, will come to the government and say — Look, I have some nice ideas, good ideas — we shall listen to him. Why not? He didn't come yet.

[Gefen] Then the prime minister looked into the future:

[Peres] Labor believes deeply that before the end of this century, which means in another four years, we shall be able to complete peace with all the Arab neighbors and bring a message to this region. We have already relations with seven Arab countries. We hope to have relations with 20, 22, maybe 24 Arab countries, then to

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continue the economic prosperity for Israel, for all the people in Israel: Arabs and Jews.

Israel is undergoing over the last four years an unprecedented growth. It changed the life of every person; it changes the standard of the state, economically speaking. We went up from $11,500 income per capita to $16,000. I mean the difference between England and Israel today is $1,500, and we hope to overcome Great Britain and overcome France in the standard of living. We shall do it, as we did a lot of things, in spite of all the skepticism and in spite of all the cynicism. [end recording]

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1500 GMT on 21 February carries a related report, adding that Peres said that "the government opposed the bill requiring a special majority to amend the Jerusalem Law because it runs counter to democratic rules and because its legislation would be a complete mistake." Peres added that "in his opinion, progress can be made with Syria even before the elections and that the negotiations will continue as planned."

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1600 GMT on 21 February adds that Peres said that "Israel will meet its commitment on the date for the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] withdrawal from Hebron."]

Israel: Minister Bar'am Says Palestinians Must Forgo Jerusalem

TA2102165396 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 21 Feb 96

[Telephone interview with Israeli Tourism Minister 'Uzi Bar'am by anchor Rafi Ginat; place not given — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Ginat] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres has dubbed the Likud's campaign concerning Jerusalem a tall tale and announced that there is no talk at all about partitioning Jerusalem. Do you have 100-percent trust in his pronouncement that there is no talk at all about partitioning Jerusalem?

[Bar'am] There is a very big difference between tactical and strategic issues and a spiritual Jewish issue. In my opinion, no Jewish prime minister can cede Jerusalem after its liberation. As I believe that we hold our own cards in the negotiations with the PLO, and as the Palestinians will have a permanent entity, they will have to forgo Jerusalem. The problem of Jerusalem is not one between the PLO and Israel but between Israel and the Islamic world and between Israel and the Christian world. On this point, we will have to deal at length with the absolute autonomy of the holy sites. If we stick to our position, Jerusalem will become a city like 'Akko and Ramla: a united city, despite all its problems, with a Jewish mayor and an Arab deputy mayor.

The Palestinian Authority [PA] elections showed — and I knew it back at the time when I was the interior minister — that most inhabitants of Arab Jerusalem do not want to be part of the PA.

[Ginat] Thank you very much and good evening.

Israel: Peres Angry at 'Hysterical' Labor Response to Likud Charges

TA2102172096 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 21 Feb 96 p A2

[Report by Yerah Tal]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres leveled severe criticism at the way senior Labor members have responded to Likud propaganda on Jerusalem. In several meetings he held over the past few days, Peres expressed anger at some of the ministers and at Labor Secretary General Nisim Zvili for their remarks. Peres called Labor's response "disorganized and overdramatic." He was angered by the fact that the party still does not have a reaction team to respond immediately and in an organized fashion to the opposition's attacks.

The prime minister was angered by the fact that Labor, although it knew about the possibility of the Likud's using Jerusalem as a main issue in its election propaganda, was caught unaware and responded in a hysterical and disorganized way. Peres had reservations about the manifesto Zvili proposed to the other parties to remove Jerusalem from the campaign and was displeased with Minister Efrayim Sne's remarks that the Likud campaign could lead to another political assassination. Senior Labor sources expressed surprise at the prime minister's charges and noted that as he is party chairman, nobody would have prevented him from setting up a reaction team had he wanted to do so.

In view of his dissatisfaction with the response to the Likud campaign, Peres decided to move up the appointment of the heads of the campaign headquarters and made their composition known yesterday. The headquarters will officially open in the coming days but will start operating in practice only after the Labor primaries — that is, in late March or early April. [passage omitted]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 21 February reports that "Labor has set up a reaction team made up of Ministers Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer, Ehud Baraq, Hayim Ramon, and Moshe Shahal, as well as Labor Secretary General Nisim Zvili. Our party affairs

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correspondent Yaron Deqel says the team was set up following the reactions to the Likud's announcement on Jerusalem, which aroused the prime minister's anger."]

Israel: Peres Holds Consultations Prior to Syria Talks

TA2202090596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres held consultations this morning prior to the Israeli delegation's departure for Maryland next week to continue the talks with the Syrian delegation. The talks will resume on 28 February.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that the participants were given a general outline of the topics discussed so far and those the teams will continue to deal with in the next round. These are normalization, economics, and security arrangements.

Participating in the consultations were Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq, Foreign Ministry Director General Uri Savir, legal adviser Yo'el Singer, Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq, Major General 'Uzi Dayan, and his replacement in the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Planning Branch Maj. Gen. Sha'ul Mufaz, as well as the prime minister's military secretary, Maj. Gen. Dani Yatom. Our correspondent adds that Gen. Mufaz will also attend next week's Maryland talks.

Israel: Envoy on EU's Ties With Syria, Israel

TA2102145296 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 21 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Thomas O'Dwyer]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Syria has changed its attitude to the Middle East peace process and is edging toward the concept of free trade and open borders, the ambassador of the European Union [EU] said yesterday.

Jean-Paul Jesse, the newly appointed head of the European Commission Delegation in Israel, said the Europeans and Middle Eastern states are in a totally new economic and political environment in which Israel and the EU are forging a new type of relationship.

Briefing reporters at the EU offices in Tel Aviv, Jesse said Israelis either lacked knowledge of the EU or harbored some resentment of the community's past stance on Middle East questions.

Jesse said he wanted to leave history behind and concentrate on informing Israelis about the EU and improving their relations with it.

The EU has become more deeply involved in the Middle East peace process since a 27-nation Barcelona conference last November that launched the idea of establishing a Euro-Mediterranean free trade area within 15 years.

In the context of Barcelona, Syria has agreed to open trade and cooperation talks with the EU, and Jesse said the move was significant.

He said an EU delegation to Damascus found President Hafiz al-Asad "in a good mood."

"Syria was reluctant in the past to embark on an association with the EU in the context of a peace process involving Israel," Jesse said.

"Now the context has changed. Syria is heading in the direction of opening up trade, of opening its borders. In return, the EU can help the Syrians develop their economic systems, help with their banks, help them organize ministries."

He admitted that human rights issues in Syria are still a problem for the EU, but the community considered the underpinning of the peace process a more important prize than dealing with every outstanding issue. "Rome wasn't built in a day," he added.

Jesse described the trade and cooperation deal Israel signed with the EU last year as an "economic pillar in a new relationship" which will bring prosperity to Israel and greatly increase its economic ties with Europe.

Israel: Sources Link Kinkel Cancellation to Orient House Affair

TA2102170396 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 21 Feb 96 p 3

[Report by Ben Kaspit]

[FBIS Translated Text] German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, who was scheduled to arrive in Israel on an official visit on 3 March, has at this point called off his visit in the wake of Minister Moshe Shahal's decision to bar European foreign ministers from visiting Orient House in East Jerusalem.

Political sources in the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem said yesterday that this is the first reaction to Shahal's announcement and that additional repercussions should be expected in the future. "The closure of Orient House will create tension with the EU. Kinkel will not be the last foreign minister who decides to forgo a visit under the present circumstances," one source said.

At this point, following consultations between Bonn and Jerusalem over the past 24 hours, Kinkel's nonarrival in Israel is defined as "a postponement due to technical reasons." The purpose is to put off any moves that involve Orient House and Minister Shahal's decision

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to bar European foreign ministers from visiting it until the upcoming debate scheduled to be held by Prime Minister Shim'on Peres.

Israel: Baraq Orders Navy To Ignore King Husayn Sea Infiltrations

TA2102171596 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 21 Feb 96 p 24

[Report by Ben Kaspit]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jordan's King Husan regularly ignores the maritime border between the two countries and infiltrates Israel's territorial waters with his royal yacht. Nevertheless, Israel has decided to ignore this behavior.

A few weeks ago, the Navy sent a letter to the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] senior echelons complaining about the infiltrations and asking for instructions. The letter noted that the king crosses the maritime border as he pleases and at times even sails close to the naval base in Elat. "About two weeks ago, the royal yacht got as far as approximately 200 meters from the naval base in Elat," the letter noted.

The issue was raised with Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq and Major General 'Uzi Dayan, head of the Planning Department. They approached the Foreign Ministry, which proceeded to send a flash cable to Israeli Ambassador to Jordan Shim'on Shamir. The latter, in a carefully explained reply, proposed that nothing be done. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq endorsed the ambassador's recommendation and ordered that this behavior be ignored.

Israel: Rabbis Order Followers Not To Vote in Secular Primaries

TA2102201896 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 21 Feb 96

[Dan Raviv video report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Council of Torah Sages decided today to bar thousands of ultra-Orthodox who have registered with Labor and the Likud from participating in these parties' primaries. The rabbis council did not decide today which candidate they will recommend their followers vote for in the direct elections for prime minister, although the issue was raised. Dan Raviv reports:

[Raviv] The secular public does not know the rabbis who make up the council but in view of the direct elections for prime minister, the decisions it will make will become critical for the secular parties. They can order their hundreds of thousands of obedient ultra-Orthodox followers to vote for either Shim'on Peres or Binyamin Netanyahu or to abstain altogether. Polls indicate that Netanyahu has an advantage in the ultra-Orthodox sector. Therefore, the rabbis' decisions are of the utmost importance. They decided today to make their decision at the last minute, after they exhaust rounds of meetings with the leaders of both parties during which they will try to get the most out of them for the interests of the ultra-Orthodox community. [passage omitted]

Israel: PLO 'Warned' Not To Intervene in Knesset Elections

TA2202111196 Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew 22 Feb 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The government has warned the PLO not to intervene in the Israeli elections, after having received intelligence reports that the PLO intends to intervene in the elections here and assist Arab and left-wing Jewish parties that support PLO stands.

The warning says that Israel kept out of the Palestinian Authority elections and did not support candidates it favored; hence, the PA should not intervene in the Israeli elections.

The intelligence elements have learned that the PLO intends to contribute funds and garner public support for parties that sympathize with the Palestinian cause, in an attempt to help the PLO pass resolutions in the Knesset that would be beneficial for it in the negotiations on the permanent arrangement.

According to the plan, Yasir 'Arafat was to call on Israeli Arabs to vote for Arab parties or left-wing parties such as Meretz, assuming that such a call would help those parties in the Arab sector. [passage omitted]

Israel: Likud Fears Netanyahu-Meridor Dispute Could Harm Elections

TA2202071396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Likud is concerned that the discord between Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu and Knesset Member [MK] Dan Meridor will harm the party in the elections. Likud MK's told our party affairs correspondent Yaron Deqel that the dispute between the two might also harm the outcome of the campaign on Jerusalem. In his first remarks since the crisis broke out, MK Meridor told our correspondent that there is no point in searching for a conflict among the Likud leadership. He noted that Binyamin Netanyahu is the Likud's candidate for prime minister. It was agreed that Meridor would work at the party's campaign headquarters, but Meridor refused to say whether he would agree to lead the campaign. A short time ago, Netanyahu and Meridor issued a joint announcement denying the talk about a rift between them.

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Lebanon: Israeli Air Force Attacks 'Terrorist' Targets in South

TA2102201396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 21 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Air Force planes attacked terrorist targets in the Jabal Safi area in south Lebanon. Our correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that the targets were training bases and departure points for Hizballah. All planes returned safely to base.

Lebanon: Israeli Aircraft Stage Five Raids on South

NC2202063896 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0504 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to our correspondent in al-Nabatiyah, Muhammad al-Shaqqur, enemy military aircraft raided the Jarju'-al-Luwayzah highway two minutes ago. This is the fifth aerial attack since 0645 today. The hostile aircraft are still flying at low altitude.

Lebanon: Israeli Air Raids on South Detailed

NC2202064996 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to Muhammad Shaqqur, THE NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in al-Nabatiyah, at 0645 today enemy aircraft carried out four raids on Iqlim al-Tuffah, focusing on Jabal Safi. The Israeli military aircraft are still flying low over al-Nabatiyah and Iqlim al-Tuffah in an attempt to stage more raids. The enemy aircraft are being confronted by anti-aircraft fire from the Lebanese Army and the Resistance.

The enemy aircraft carried out an aerial attack yesterday over the same areas but there were no reports of casualties.

At about 0700 today Israeli military aircraft resumed their raids on the area. They raided the Jarju'-al-Luwayzah highway. This was the sixth air raid since 0645 today. The hostile aircraft are still flying low over al-Nabatiyah and Iqlim al-Tuffah. The Lebanese Army and Resistance anti-aircraft guns are confronting them.

Lebanon: Hizballah Fighters Fire Missiles at Israeli Aircraft

NC2202083196 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Zionist enemy military aircraft carried out intensive air raids over the Iqlim al-Tuffah area yesterday and today. Islamic Resistance fighters fired missiles at the warplanes. Correspondent Samir 'Alamah reports:

[Begin 'Alamah recording] The enemy leaders translated their threats to Hizballah into air raids against the Iqlim al-Tuffah Heights last night and this morning after repeated overflights throughout yesterday, last night, and this morning. Beginning at 0600 today the hostile aircraft launched six air raids during a one-hour attack on the Iqlim al-Tuffah Heights, firing air-to-surface missiles. Zionist military aircraft are continuing their flights over Iqlim al-Tuffah and al-Nabatiyah.

The Zionist aircraft staged an air raid over Iqlim al-Tuffah at 2025 yesterday. Security sources said the aircraft fired two missiles during the raid. Earlier yesterday Israeli warplanes and reconnaissance aircraft repeatedly overflew the south and carried out mock raids over Sidon and Iqlim al-Tuffah. Israeli helicopters flew over al-Naqurah and Blat at 2200 yesterday. Reconnaissance planes overflew Kafra, Yatar, and Siddiqin.

The Islamic Resistance continued its attacks on the enemy and its Agents [South Lebanese Army]. At 2145 yesterday Resistance fighters attacked the Israeli post in al-Hirdawn with the appropriate weapons, inflicting casualties.

Enemy leaders paved the way for their new aggression by fabricating claims against Hizballah, blaming it for an attempt to carry out an operation using a glider on the evening of 20 February. The enemy persisted in its claims although no neutral sources confirmed that a glider exploded over Majdal Silm, as the enemy leaders said. 'Amiram Levin, commander of the northern zone in the enemy army, said Hizballah is increasingly resorting to more advanced means in its operations against Israel and what he called the security strip. Levin blamed Syria for the operations because Hizballah enjoys some free movement despite Syria's control in Lebanon.

Hizballah denied reports by enemy sources that a Hizballah glider exploded in midair the night before last while launching an attack on enemy posts. Hizballah said: We refute what the Zionist spokesman said.

The Islamic Revolutionary Army for the Liberation of Palestine, [aljaysh althawri alislami li tahrir filastin] denied media reports on its responsibility for the operation. In a statement released yesterday, it said: At a time when we emphasize our support for every form of struggle against the Zionist enemy, we deny our responsibility for carrying out an alleged suicidal operation using a glider.

Observers see the new fabricated Zionist claims of Hizballah's responsibility for the glider operation as an attempt by the enemy leaders to apply pressure to activate the military front in south Lebanon to influence

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the result of the Zionist election, which the Peres-led Labor Party is fighting with more radical slogans. The aim is either to halt the negotiations with Syria on the occupied Golan or to activate the military front in the south. These sources note the enemy media furor over the glider issue and the bragging about military decisions by the Israeli army. [end recording]

Lebanon: Buwayz on Relations With EU, 'Awn, Elections

MM2102140596 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 19 Feb 96 p2

[Interview with Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz by Randah Taqiyy-al-Din in Paris during Buwayz' stopover en route to Madrid; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Taqiyy-al-Din] Could you talk to us about the Francophone conference which you attended yesterday at Bordeaux in southern France?

[Buwayz] The foreign ministers of the Francophone countries met at Bordeaux to discuss several issues including the situation in Niger and some other Francophone countries. The discussions also covered cultural relations and a number of Francophone projects pertaining to the fields of education and culture as well as the conference agenda, which contained a paragraph concerning Lebanon and the need for implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions and for Israeli withdrawal. This paragraph also dealt with bolstering the achievements that Lebanese legitimacy has secured by its efforts.

Furthermore, the conference provided an opportunity to hold a number of marginal meetings with the leaders of these African countries, particularly as there are communities of their nationals in Lebanon, and also with the French officials who were present in Bordeaux such as Prime Minister Juppe and Secretary of State for Francophone Affairs Margie Sudre in addition to a number of officials from the French Foreign Ministry.

We will be holding talks with the Spanish side on bilateral relations, which both sides realize should be activated on all levels through Spain's role in the field of reconstruction in Lebanon as well as through its role within the EU. Spain chaired the EU conference in Barcelona, which plays an articulate role in the sphere of European relations.

We believe that the Lebanese-European dialogue, which began in Brussels during my visit there and which has made several strides forward, demands the holding of consultations with a number of European countries, including Spain.

[Taqiyy-al-Din] Will it be possible for General 'Awn to return to Lebanon to participate in the elections?

[Buwayz] Definitely. There can be no political life without actual participation by the opposition, whatever this opposition might be. I believe that the opposition should participate in the elections from the positions they hold.

With regard to General 'Awn's return, I believe that once the legal period [of his exile] expires, then it will be up to him to take the proper decision with regard to his return. But personally, I am not one of those who oppose General 'Awn's return provided that his return is political and is not connected with any peace- disturbing plans.

[Taqiyy-al-Din] But can he have a guarantee that upon his return to Lebanon he will not meet with a fate like that which has befallen Samir Ja'ja'?

[Buwayz] I believe the matter has two aspects. The first aspect is political. I do not believe that there exists any readiness [on 'Awn's part] for a negative dialogue outside the bounds of law. The second aspect is a legal one, which has to be discussed prior to his return in order to clarify legal matters.

[Taqiyy-al-Din] What will these legal matters be once the legal term of his exile expires?

[Buwayz] I do not know precisely what legal matters there are, if indeed there are any. Anyway, this question is independent of the political aspect and should be tackled prior to his return.

[Taqiyy-al-Din] The social situation seems very tense in Lebanon and disturbances and demonstrations are expected to take place, though the government seems inclined to ban them. What can you say to the Lebanese people who are disgruntled because of the government's policy?

[Buwayz] There have been some achievements in recent years, though I am one of those who say that these achievements were not all that the Lebanese people on all levels aspire to. However, I believe it is naturally fair to admit that such achievements have been made. What has been achieved is connected with the general political conditions in the region. We must not imagine that we can overcome all these difficulties and problems before we resolve some of these issues. To content ourselves with raising the matters we aspire to without reading the conditions in the region is a political error. We must think, rationally and calmly, what we should do and how to prepare Lebanon for its future needs, first and foremost the peace process, taking into consideration

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our ability to absorb international and regional political developments.

It is right for every Lebanese to be eager to see achievements in the shortest possible time. But, sometimes, it would be equally politically wrong not to feel content with some matters, under conditions which do not permit the development of these matters in a better way.

[Taqiyy-al-Din] Do you believe that the government should allow demonstrations and strikes?

[Buwayz] I believe the security element constitutes the crucial limit for freedom in this regard. Maximum freedom must be granted as long as it does not threaten security conditions in the country. This is a matter which can be determined technically and practically by the security authorities and particularly by the Interior Ministry. I am an advocate of maximum freedom of expression and political practice. But, at the same time, I am one of those who realize that Lebanon, which is recovering now and which is enjoying security at present, still cannot risk losing all its gains and achievements, due to the prevalence of certain complex and gloomy regional conditions.

[Taqiyy-al-Din] Do you expect that there will be peace between Syria and Israel and between Lebanon and Israel this year?

[Buwayz] It is nothing new to say that a lot of bets have been laid on the completion of the peace process by the end of the current year. Undoubtedly, the political climate that prevailed following Rabin's death has been one of openness in this direction. But despite all that is being said about the Israeli elections and their having no effect on the course of events, perhaps their effect will prove to be less than expected when the elections actually take place. I believe, however, that there is a tendency toward postponing the process pending the Israeli elections. But if it is true that the negotiations will continue because of American pressure in favor of continuing the negotiations and if the negotiations do actually continue, then I believe that they will continue in a preliminary manner and may clarify some of the pending issues, but I do not expect any great or exceptional achievements prior to the completion of the Israeli elections.

[Taqiyy-al-Din] Will legislative elections take place in Lebanon before the completion of the peace process?

[Buwayz] The legislative elections in Lebanon will take place on time and there is no logical justification for postponing them. There might, however, be exceptional cases such as the coincidence of the timing of the Lebanese elections with the increased momentum of progress in the peace process. Should this happen a few weeks prior to the American elections, then a review of the timing of the elections might have to be considered. A tactical and technical delay for a brief period could be made on the grounds of Lebanon's preoccupation with peace negotiations.

But I must make it clear that no such factors exist so far, and I hold this as a precautionary reserve. However, I would not say that the elections would be delayed for a long time, as it will only be for a matter of a few weeks or months.

[Taqiyy-al-Din] The opposition has been demanding adherence to the Synod and President al-Hariri has visited the Vatican to discuss the Christians' participation in the elections. How do you view these matters?

[Buwayz] The Synod is a spiritual gathering which puts forward general spiritual and philosophical ideas, which the political leaderships must take into consideration and abide by, insofar as circumstances, facts, and means in the field permit. But the Synod does not specify matters of policy application. So the statesmen should adopt any basic principles raised by the Synod which they feel are suitable for the homeland and try to implement them as far as the facts on the ground permit.

As regards relations between the government and the Synod, the form in which the Synod's decisions were announced in the media indicates that some aspects of the resolutions have acquired in wording or in form a character which implies the existence of a conflict over the Synod's ideas, particularly as the matter was raised on a political level. Thus there is a possibility that His Holiness the Pope might present the final message of the Synod in his own way, in a manner that expresses these ideas in a less sharp form.

[Taqiyy-al-Din] What guarantees are there of honest legislative elections?

[Buwayz] The question being raised is not one of election-rigging. I am one of those who say that the 1992 elections were not rigged. There is material rigging, that is direct and clear political and security pressure, there is also material pressure and other methods of rigging.

I do not believe that there will be any election rigging either materially or directly. The question is: Will the law be a good one or not? The question of the electoral law is always the subject of discussion and deliberation in all countries of the world. As no perfect electoral law that fits all conditions exists, since the electoral law is similar to a medicine, then it is our duty to diagnose the problems from which the homeland suffers.

All of us are aware that representation in the elections at the level of the small constituencies provides a

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bigger measure of direct representation. These are the advantages of representation on the level of small constituencies. But the disadvantages of this type of representation are, first and foremost, that it creates a state of instability on the level of the homeland, weakens the major blocs, currents, and parties, and preoccupies the member of parliament with personal cases and intercessions [in matters concerning his constituents] at the expense of his true legislative and monitoring tasks. Furthermore, it inflames sectarianism.

Meanwhile, the system of elections at the level of the provinces, even if this were to be at the expense of direct representation criteria and the direct relation between the member of parliament and the voters, addresses three issues, namely, political stability, blocs, and alliances, that is legislative, monitoring, and sectarian issues. This is because the provinces are more varied than the constituencies.

There is yet a third situation, namely, the system of elections on the basis of a single ticket. This is an academic proposition in constitutional science, that is, it is an academic and theoretical one and is based on the creation of two parties in the country. In this regard, the unification of ranks will take place on the basis of national stances and the general national color. But would it be possible to implement such a theory in the absence of proportional representation? For when a law is adopted on the basis of the one ticket or on the level of the homeland as a whole, the matter would be a dual one or one connected with proportional representation which ensures for the minority that failed to win, a number of seats to represent itself. Secondly, this would take place when the country is prepared at the partisan or bloc levels to enter such battles.

I believe that if it is sound, this theory amounts to gulping an entire jar of medicine in one go. I believe the country is not yet ready for such a formula. Hence the acceptable mean, so as to reconcile the minimum level of direct representation with the coalition situation that produces stability, giving the member of parliament a bigger role of representation in regard to his carrying out of his legislative duties and thus helping to bring about a gradual shrinking of sectarianism, thereby preserving the province.

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Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Forces on Alert After Taleban Attack

LD2102184796 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 21 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] After heavy fighting between Afghan government forces and the Taleban over the past months, and due to anticipated end of Ramadan attacks, government forces were on full alert today.

Defense sources said that yesterday about 1000 Taleban attempted to enter Kabul and capture the city after a heavy infantry and artillery offensive. During yesterday's fighting, which was the heaviest for months, government planes raided Taleban positions in Rish Khvor, 7 km south of Kabul, several times. Observers said that after the ending of the month of Ramadan and before the start of spring in a few weeks, both sides reinforced their frontlines, since fighting usually resumes in this season.

Commanders on the southern front of Kabul in Rish Khvor described the attack as a small-scale one, saying the Taleban attack was not the major offensive on Kabul. A government commander said last night's fighting continued for some time but it was not the anticipated final attack.

Afghanistan: Taleban Commander Reported Killed in Kabul Fighting

LD2102184196 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 21 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A famous Taleban commander and several of his men were killed in last night's battle in the west of Kabul. Reports reaching BAKHTAR say that Mullah Amir Mohammad, a Taleban commander, who was (?commanding) the combat operation in the absence of Mullah Mashar, was killed when the Taleban bases were subjected to heavy artillery fire, as well as air raids by Air Force planes. The report adds that during the battle, 21 Taleban men were wounded and were ousted from the combat fronts.

Taleban started their military operation on the first day of 'Id al-Fitr. They were given a necessary response by the Islamic Army and Air Force.

Today also heavy-weapons exchanges continued between the Taleban and the Islamic Army. Islamic Army warplanes also carried out several bombing sorties against Taleban concentrations in the west of Kabul. The Taleban attack came after their preparations for a big offensive against Kabul. The attack was repulsed.

Afghanistan: Government Troops, Taleban in 'Fierce' Battle Near Kabul

BK2202094596 Hong Kong AFP in English 0938 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, Feb 22 (AFP) — The Afghan government has carried out four bombing raids on the Taleban militia besieging Kabul during a fierce three-hour battle south of the city, military personnel said Thursday.

The two sides also exchanged heavy rocket and artillery fire during the skirmish late Wednesday, but the front lines at Rish Khvor — where the firefight took place — remain unchanged, officers said.

The battle was the second between the two warring factions near Kabul in as many days, and came during a Muslim religious holiday which observers fear could mark the start of an escalation of hostilities.

Commanders on both sides have warned that they expected the opposing faction to launch an all-out offensive during the three-day 'Id festival.

But soldiers at Rish Khvor said that although Wednesday's battle was intense, it was not part of a major Taleban operation aimed at achieving their declared goal of seizing the embattled city.

"The fighting was heavier than it generally has been over the last month, but was still routine and was not accompanied by any ground troop movement," Major Khawaja Naeem told AFP.

No details of casualties or losses sustained in the government bombing of the Taleban base at Chahar Asiab, which lies 25 kilometers (15 miles) from Kabul, were immediately available.

The battle followed another major fight between the rival factions on Tuesday.

The defence ministry here had said that its forces had repulsed an attempt by 1,000 armed Taleban to break into the city. Government bombers carried out a series of devastating raids on Taleban positions during the attack which was started by the Taleban, they said.

The Islamic warriors, who have been encamped around Kabul for five months, have vowed to topple the administration of President Borhanoddin Rabbani and to impose Islamic law throughout the country.

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India

India: 40 More Politicians Charged in Money Scandal

BK2202122096 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1135 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] has filed charge sheets against 40 more politicians in a designated court this afternoon in the hawala [illegal money transfer] case. The Supreme Court was informed that the permission is being sought from the president to charge sheet Delhi chief minister, Mr. Madan Lal Khurana, for allegedly receiving hawala money.

The leaders against whom charge sheets have been filed are the former union ministers — Mr. R.K. Dhawan, Mr. Kamal Nath, Mr. Bhuta Singh, and Mr. Arvind Netam. All these leaders have resigned from the union Council of Ministers in the last three days. The other leaders who are from union ministers are Mr. Harmohan Dhawan, Mr. A.K. Sen, Mr. Natwar Singh, and Mr. Jaffar Sharief. The leader of the breakaway Congress, Mr. N.D. Tiwari and the senior Janata Dal leader, Mr. Sharad Yadav, are also among those against whom charge sheets have been filed. Other leaders are Mr. B.D. Thagne, Mr. L.P. Shahi, and Mr. Ranjit Singh.

Giving the resumption of the hawala case, the solicitor general, Mr. Dipankar Gupta, told the apex court comprising Mr. Justice G.S. Verma, Mr. Justice F.B. Barucha, and Mr. Justice S.C. Sen that 115 (?entries) having names of the recipients of hawala money have been found in the diaries of the prime accused, S.K. Jain. He said: Out of that, 24 have been charge sheeted, six have died, and eight remain unidentified or not fully identified. In case of the Delhi chief minister, the permission is awaited.

The Delhi chief minister, Mr. Madan Lal Khurana, has sent in his resignation to the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] party high command after the CBI sought permission to prosecute him in the Jain hawala case. The party is expected to take a decision on the resignation shortly.

India: Seventh Minister Resigns Over Money Scandal

BK2102145096 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 21 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The urban affairs and employment minister, Mr. R.K. Dhawan, has resigned from the union Council of Ministers. His resignation has been accepted by the president on the advice of the prime minister. Mr. Dhawan is the seventh minister to have resigned on the hawala [illegal money transfer] issue. His name figures in the controversial Jain hawala diary as one of those alleged to have received the hawala money.

Earlier, the civil supplies minister, Mr. Buta Singh, the textiles minister, Mr. Kamal Nath, and the minister of state for agriculture, Mr. Arvind Netam, resigned in the last two days on the same issue.

The Delhi chief minister, Mr. Madan Lal Khurana, has said that he has left the decision of his resignation on hawala issue to the party high command. He reiterated that there is no prima facie case against him. The name of Mr. Khurana also appears in the Jain diary as a recipient of the hawala money.

India: Court Nullifies Election of Senior Congress-I Leader Shukla

BK2002163096 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 20 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Madhya Pradesh High Court has set aside the election of the senior Congress-I leader and former union minister, Mr. V.C. Shukla, to the Lok Sabha in 1991 from Raipur constituency. The court, however, granted a three week's stay in the operation of the judgment during which Mr. Shukla can file an appeal in the Supreme Court.

The judgment came on an election petition filed by the defeated BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] candidate, Mr. Ramesh Vyas. The petitioner had challenged the election of Mr. Shukla on the grounds of rejection of nomination papers of one of the candidates, Mr. Shobha Ram Burman. The court held that the nomination paper of Mr. Burman was improperly rejected by the returning officer on the ground that he held an office of profit. The judge, Mr. Justice D.P.S. Chauhan, allowed the petitioner the cost of 5,000 rupees but rejected the petitioner's plea to declare him elected in place of Mr. Shukla on the grounds that there were more than two candidates in the fray.

India: Militants in Assam Kill 5 CRPF Soldiers, Kidnap 4

BK2102162696 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 21 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Assam, at least five CRPF [Central Reserve Police Force] men were killed today when suspected Bodo militants blew off their vehicle with a remote control bomb. According to PTI, the incident took place near Serakati in Bongaigaon District. Official sources in Guwahati said that the extremists had planted a bomb on a bridge. The vehicle was going from Kokrajhar to Bongaigaon.

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A UNI report from Guwahati says that suspected ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] militants today kidnapped Mofidul Haq, the son of the Assam minister of state for food processing, Mr. Rashidul Haq, and three of his associates in Naogaon District. The kidnappers struck when Mofidul Haq and his associates were proceeding in a car from the district headquarters to Rupahi. A manhunt has been launched to capture the militants.

India: Rao Makes Offer of Unconditional Talks to Naga Insurgents

BK2202091296 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister has offered to have talks with Naga insurgent groups without any preconditions for finding a solution to the insurgency problem in the state. Addressing a public meeting at Dimapur in Nagaland today to mark the completion of three years of the Congress-I government in the state, Mr. Narasimha Rao said that solutions to problems can be found only through talks across the table; violence will bring only misery. He called upon the underground elements to come forward to hold talks with the center.

Mr. Narasimha Rao assured all assistance to the people of the northeast for their all-round development. The prime minister announced that the region would be given special attention in the massive industrialization program in the ninth plan, but he added that this would be possible only if there is continued peace and stability in the northeast. The Nagaland chief minister, Mr. S.C. Jamir, in his speech expressed his gratitude to the prime minister for paying a visit to the state. Earlier, on his arrival at Dimapur on a two-day visit to Nagaland, Assam, and Meghalaya, the Nagaland governor, Mr. O.N. Srivastava, Mr. S.C. Jamir, and his cabinet colleagues received him at the airport.

India: Meeting With Pakistani Border Forces Held To Defuse Tension

BK1702160896 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 17 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A flag meeting between the BSF [Border Security Force] and Pakistani Rangers was held in Anupgarh sector of Sri Ganganagar District last night to defuse tension following Thursday night's firing incident. Seven persons were killed in the firing. News agencies quoting BSF sources say that security along the Indo-Pakistan border near Binjor in Anupgarh sector has been strengthened.

India: Delhi Rejects Pakistani Protests Over Kashmir Map

BK1602150896 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 16 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi has rejected Pakistan's protest over display of the Indian map showing Jammu and Kashmir as part of the country at the World Cricket Cup tournament at Calcutta. Islamabad had also protested at the map in the tourist brochure circulated at India's Republic Day function at the Indian High Commission in Islamabad.

The Indian high commissioner, rejecting the protest, told the Pakistani foreign secretary, Mr. Najmuddin Sheikh, that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India. Therefore, display of any Indian map in the brochure or the World Cup tournament will inevitably show it as part of the country.

India: Government in 'Dilemma' on Timing of Kashmir Polls

BK2102141496 Delhi NAVBHARAT TIMES in Hindi 17 Feb 96 p 1

[Report by special correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Text] New Delhi, 16 February — The Central Government is yet to take any concrete decision on matters with regard to holding elections in Jammu and Kashmir. Although the government is in favor of holding elections in this terrorist-infested sensitive state as soon as possible, no decision has been taken by it on the timing of the polls.

The government has to apprise the Election Commission after making a decision on this so that it can take appropriate steps. According to Union Home Secretary K. Padmanabhaiah, the government has not contacted the commission recently in this connection. He said that he cannot throw more light on the issue because no consultations have been held with the commission on this matter.

In the background of the Supreme Court's ruling, the Union Government considered it appropriate to consult political leaders from the state before approaching the Election Commission, and Home Minister S.B. Chavan submitted his report to Prime Minister Narasimha Rao after exchanging views with the representatives of various political parties for two days. The prime minister was to take a final decision in the matter and inform the Election Commission through the Home Ministry about the government's thinking.

During his meeting with the representatives of political parties on the last day, Chavan categorically told newsmen that we can go ahead with elections in Jammu and

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Kashmir as conditions there are conducive for this. Padmanabhaiah also said in this connection that he would apprise the Election Commission about the Union Government's thinking. When asked as to when he would approach the Election Commission, Padmanabhaiah said that he would meet with them at an early date.

Although the government had been talking about holding elections in Kashmir for quite some time, the Election Commission refused to agree with the government's thinking that conditions there are conducive after visiting the state in the last days of last year. Only then did Professor Bhim Singh, the Kashmir Panthers Party president, approach the Supreme Court.

According to informed sources the government's dilemma is whether to hold the elections in the state before the Lok Sabha elections or along with them. As soon as the government makes up its mind, it will apprise the Election Commission of its decision. A suggestion has also been made in this connection that elections in the state be held in phases and in the first phase Lok Sabha elections should be held there to move forward toward the goal.

The government is endeavoring to somehow get the support of leaders of some influential militant groups to achieve some success in this connection. It does not want to enter into negotiations with lightweight groups to lessen the importance of the issue. That is why it is reluctant to hold talks with the four militant leaders even after extending a general invitation to all militants.

India: Nuclear Power Corporation Plans Increased Energy Production

BK2102104596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 21 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Nuclear Power Corporation [NPC] is planning to increase the installed capacity of atomic power stations in the country by about 1000 megawatt every year. The aim is to enhance the capacity from the present 2000 megawatt to 20,000 megawatt over the next two decades. Our correspondent R.C. Panigrahi, who visited the Narora power plant, reports:

[Begin Panigrahi recording] Considering the limited coal reserves in the country and their uneven distribution and logistic problems of transportation, nuclear power is poised to be India's inevitable option for future needs. Apart from uranium, we have large deposits of thorium, and both the metals put together will be equivalent to about three times the energy potential of total coal reserves. Moreover, nuclear power plants like the Narora atomic power station offer intrinsic advantages in respect to safety during normal operation as also accidental conditions. For example, the fire incident in one of the units at Narora in the recent past, which was due to turbine blade failure, was handled by the engineers efficiently and in the shortest possible time. The incident had no adverse effect to the reactor system which is primarily responsible for power generation. [end recording]

The NPC managing director, Mr. Y.S.R. Prasad, told visiting newsmen that financial constraint is seriously hampering the nuclear power program. A major reason for paucity of funds is nonrecovery of dues from state electricity boards which use the power.

India: Sources Say Government Under Pressure on Nuclear Issue

BK2102121196 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 17 Feb 96 p 12

[Report by M.K. Dhar]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] NEW DELHI, Feb 16. India feels deeply concerned over Pakistan's acquisition of ring magnets from China for its Kahuta uranium enrichment plant and the US administration's reluctance to cancel arms deliveries to Islamabad under the Brown Amendment on the plea of no determination.

Brushing aside evidence procured by its own intelligence agency and ignoring Pakistan's relentless pursuit of nuclear weapons makes nonsense of the US administration's professed nuclear nonproliferation goals, informed sources here said.

Pakistan's nuclear weapons program poses a threat to India's security and the Government, which faces general elections in the next few months, will come under renewed pressure to shed its nuclear ambiguity and take appropriate steps to upgrade its capability to safeguard national security.

Pakistan's weapon-oriented program has now reached an advanced stage and the US excuse of no determination carries no conviction with either the Government or the people of India.

Apart from the opposition parties, which are attacking the government for not protecting national security adequately, the defense and the scientific community also feels that conventional forces superiority alone will not safeguard India's security in the absence of a sufficiently strong and credible deterrent against nuclear armed Pakistan.

Official sources maintain that determination of Pakistan having acquired nuclear technology components and materials as well as M-11 missiles would nullify the Brown Amendment and lead to imposition of sanctions, which the Clinton administration is most reluctant to do.

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Pakistam's nuclear weapons program and the tendency on the part of the US to suppress evidence of Pakistan's pursuit of a weapons program further strengthens the Indian belief that the nuclear powers pay only lip service to nonproliferation and fail to abide by the NPT [Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty] and MTCR [Missile Technology Control Regime], which they want others also to join.

In its 1993 report to the Congress, the White House, while referring to nuclear and missile proliferation in South Asia, admitted that "concerns remain about whether China has terminated its links to Pakistan's nuclear weapons program and about its missile export policies." A classified report on the subject also was provided to the Congress.

It is pointed out that Washington's massive economic assistance to Pakistan in the 1980's indirectly helped Pakistan acquire nuclear weapons. It freed up internal resources for the nuclear program and the activities included smuggling contraband technology from the US and other Western sources, training scientists and engineers and building nuclear installations at several places.

Pakistan's attempts to obtain Krytron switches, Zirconium alloys maraging steel and beryllium from US companies were brushed aside. Becuase of US economic assistance, Pakistan's weapon-oriented nuclear program made rapid advance which would, otherwlse, not have been possible.

According to diplomatic sources the disclosure about Chinese supply of ring magnets and deportation orders for Mohammad Salim, an employee of the Pakistan High Commission in London, are interlinked developments. The Lahore-based Pakistani company, Global Consultants, owned by retired army officials, had placed an order with Sweden-based Hungarian company FIXTURLASER for purchase of laser measurement devices, which are dual use equipment. It is needed in studies related to marrying nuclear weapons with missiles and other delivery platforms. This was shipped to London from Sweden for onward dispatch to Pakistan, but British customs at Heathrow airport returned the equipment to Sweden. This happened in November 1995.

In another incident more laser measuring equipment, imported from Hungary and meant for Global Consultants, also was detected in London. A consignment of special types of valves having nuclear usage from France and meant for Pakistan was similarly detected at Heathrow.

Iran

Iran: Velayati To Resume Talks With EU Over Rushdie Case

AU2202155896 Paris AFP in English 1522 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Geneva, Feb 22 (AFP) — Iran will resume negotiations with the European Union on the writer Salman Rushdie, sentenced to death by the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati said here Thursday [22 February].

Khomeini condemned Rushdie, an Indian-born Briton, to death in 1989 over his novel "The Satanic Verses", which many Moslems see as blasphemous to their faith.

Velayati said talks would resume because relations between Iran and the EU had improved.

"We have made some progress in the negotiations with the EU when the chairman was Spain" in the last six months of 1995, the minister said.

"Now we are to resume talks with Italy. The situation between Iran and the EU is better than before. This process will continue."

Italy chairs the EU until the end of June.

Iran: Iranians Allegedly Subject to 'Beatings' by NATO Forces

LD2102160796 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 21 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Three Iranian nationals, who had gone to Bosnia on an invitation by the Bosnian government and were arrested by U.S. members of the NATO [forces] for being present at a Bosnian training center, arrived back in Tehran this morning.

According to a Central News Unit report, quoting these three compatriots, NATO units, commanded by the Americans, after arresting these people subjected them to beatings. Meanwhile Western media tried at the time to start up a new propaganda clamor against Islamic Iran.

The coincidence of this move by the the American forces and the media propaganda clamor over the world al-Quds [Jerusalem] Day strongly suggests that one of the objectives of that scenario was to undermine the effect of the tremendously widespread presence of the world Muslims in the al-Quds Day rallies.

Our ambassador to Sarajevo, who has accompanied the three Iranian nationals to Tehran, in an interview with our correspondent, said: The Bosnian government has

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strongly objected to this move by the American forces, taking it as a blatant intervention in the internal affairs of that country. NATO forces, which had no evidence or reason to prove their claims, were obliged to release the [Iranian] detainees.

Iran: Iranians Detained in Bosnia Complain of 'Savage' Treatment

LD2102195296 Tehran IRNA in English 1848 GMT 21 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 21, IRNA — Two Iranian diplomats who were badly beaten by NATO forces in (Dossina), Bosnia-Herzegovina, last Thursday [15 February] said here today that during their custody at the hands of NATO forces they had been subjected to every sort of savage behavior and torture. Asghar 'Alishahi and Mohammad Poursalem said that they had been roughly treated by NATO forces in Dossina, 14 kilometers south of Fojnica, despite the fact that they had been diplomats.

He said the raid by NATO forces into a headquarters for training the police had been a planned operations by NATO, and that before having embarked on those operation NATO had also coordinated with the international media.

'Alishahi said NATO forces had beaten the Iranian diplomats for about three hours, on hour of it in cold weather and on a snow field.

He said the claim by the Western media that the presence in Fojnica of the Iranian diplomats had been against agreements was unfounded. He said the Dayton agreement disallows the presence of military forces while the Iranian diplomats were there only to offer administrative help to the police training center of Bosnia- Herzegovina.

Poursalem said NATO has turned into occupying forces in Bosnia- Herzegovina because NATO forces violate even private dwellings in Bosnia-Herzegovina as they had raided the police training center in that city.

He said NATO forces had even stolen private property and personal goods at the center. He said they had even stolen such things tooth pastes, desk calendars, nail clippers, shoes and what not.

The two Iranian diplomats who spent more than three years in Bosnia-Herzegovina said the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina have deep friendly feelings towards the Iranian and that portraits of Imam Khomeyni and of Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i are installed on the doors of shops and many houses.

The Iranian diplomat said the three Iranians had not given an interview to the Western press in Bosnia-Herzegovina because they suspected the the motives of the Western media.

Iran: Commentary Criticizes Arrest of Iranian Diplomats in Bosnia

LD2202133696 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1051 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Upon their return to Tehran, two of the three Iranian diplomats who were attacked and beaten by NATO forces at their offices in Bosnia-Herzegovina described the inhuman and insulting behavior of those forces.

Last Thursday a number of armed NATO troops, commanded by U.S. and British officers, attacked the official training premises of Bosnia-Herzegovina police in the district of Dosina, 14 km south of Fojnica, and arrested three Iranian citizens who were training Bosnian police personnel at the invitation of the Bosnian government, despite the fact that they held diplomatic passports and diplomatic immunity.

A large force made up of 200 tanks, personnel carriers, vehicles, four helicopters, and 700 armed infantry troops had been mobilized to arrest the three Iranian diplomats and eight Bosnian police officers during the preplanned operation. The operation, which lasted up to three hours after the arrest and beating of the Iranian diplomats, was concluded after two days of detention coupled with mistreatment of the Iranian diplomats. Eventually, the three Iranian diplomats were released without any convincing explanations and returned to Tehran.

The incident, which was perpetrated by America and some of its allies under the guise of NATO, was the result of a coordinated effort coupled with vociferous propaganda in Western circles. This criminal behavior, which is clearly contrary to all legal international standards and violates the sovereignty of the Bosnian government, more than anything else has demonstrated America's fear of the effective presence of Islamic countries, particularly the Islamic Republic of Iran, on Bosnia's political, military, and cultural scene.

The interesting point here is that throughout the period in which the Bosnian people meekly defended themselves against the Serbian criminals, the Islamic Republic of Iran led other Islamic countries in its all-around support for the Bosnian people's heroic struggles and their defense of their religious and national identity. While America and other NATO members, during three and a half years of war in Bosnia, with their silence and

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implied support for the criminal Serbs, endorsed their acts of aggression.

Now it seems natural that no one would believe the claim by the U.S. and NATO commanders to the effect that Muslim forces and Islamic forces threaten peace in Bosnia. Particularly since the three civilian Iranian diplomats were in that country at the formal invitation of the Bosnian government to perform duties needed by that government to train its police force. This is, under no circumstances, contrary to the Dayton agreement, which forbids the presence of members of foreign armies.

Political observers stress, regarding the reasons for the arrest of the Iranian diplomats and their torture and detention by NATO forces, the outcome of analysis far beyond those points. That is, the arrest of the three Iranian diplomats, which took place a day before International Jerusalem Day and the deafening propaganda hue and cry which followed, and culminated the next day in a sudden silence and the release of the Iranian diplomats, was a multinational effort, led by America and with the participation of Israel and certain U.S. allies in NATO, the aim of which was to undermine the huge rallies and demonstrations of Muslim nations on International Jerusalem Day, especially in Iran and Palestine. Demonstrations in which millions of world Muslims, with one voice, called for the liberation of dear Jerusalem and the annihilation of the Zionist occupiers. The message of the International Jerusalem Day, despite those efforts, spreads further every day. This year, for the first time, more than 300,000 Muslims in Palestine challenged the Zionists and compromisers during demonstrations that disgraced the Zionists.

Iran: Afghan Minister Arrives for Talks

LD1702094896 Tehran IRNA in English 0737 GMT 17 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 17, IRNA — Acting Afghan Foreign Minister Najibollah Lafra'i, heading a high-ranking political delegation, arrived here early Saturday morning to attend a trilateral meeting of Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Upon arrival at Mehrabad Airport, Lafra'i, also President Borhanoddin Rabbani's special envoy, stressed that the Afghan Government has started new efforts to end the conflict and establish peace in the war-ravaged country.

He further voiced his government's readiness to negotiate with all belligerent Afghan parties for the settlement of the crisis.

Appreciating the peace efforts made by Iran, Lafra'i said that Tehran-Kabul ties, as well as the latest regional developments, will be highlighted in the talks with Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati.

Meanwhile, Iran's deputy foreign minister for Asia-Pacific affairs, Ala'eddin Borujerdi, expressed satisfaction over negotiations that are to be held among Afghan opposition groups, stating that such talks would certainly help establish peace and tranquility in Afghanistan.

He added that Pakistani Deputy Foreign Minister Najmuddin Shaikh is also due to arrive here later today to take part in the tripartite discussions.

Iran: Velayati Holds Talks With Afghanistan's Lafra'i

LD1702162096 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 17 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The latest developments in Afghanistan were examined today in a meeting between the Afghan minister of state for foreign affairs and Mr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati. At the meeting, Mr. Najibollah Lafra'i described the situation in Kabul and reviewed the results of the talks held recently between the Afghan Government and opposition groups. He said: Since the solution to the Afghan crisis cannot be a military one, we believe that, if foreign forces refrain from interfering in Afghanistan, the outcome of the talks will be positive. The Afghan minister of state for foreign affairs also declared that his country wishes to have good relations with neighboring countries and will strive to establish peace and calm in the region.

Mr. Velayati, for his part, described the efforts made by the Afghan Government to establish peace and resolve existing differences as beneficial. He said: Unity and solidarity between the various Afghan groups will prevent foreign countries from interfering in Afghanistan's internal affairs.

Iran: Afghan Acting Foreign Minister Meets With Nateq-Nuri

LD1802125696 Tehran IRNA in English 1058 GMT 18 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 18, IRNA — The visiting acting Afghan Foreign Minister Najibollah Lafra'i here Sunday briefed Majles Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri on the latest developments in his country and appreciated great efforts made by Iranian officials to restore peace and stability to Afghanistan.

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He further expressed hope that in the light of the recent measures of the Afghan Government in signing agreements with a number of jihad groups, ground will be prepared to restore tranquility to the Muslim-populated Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, Hojjat ol-Eslam Nateq-Nuri reiterated that the present Afghan Government is the only legitimate government in that country.

He voiced Iran's readiness to continue its peace-seeking efforts to settle disputes between different Afghan groups and end fratricide in that country.

Lafra'i, heading a high-ranking political delegation arrived here early Saturday morning to attend a trilateral meeting of Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Iran: Pakistani Official Arrives; Talks With Lafra'i Ruled Out

BK1802121796 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 18 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The foreign secretary, Mr. Najmuddin Shaikh, has arrived in Tehran for talks with the Iranian leaders to bring about peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan. The foreign minister of the Kabul regime, Mr. Lafra'i, who is also in Tehran, has held separate talks with the Iranian leaders. Pakistan has already ruled out any meeting between the foreign secretary and Mr. Lafra'i in Tehran.

Iran: Velayati Discusses Afghan Issue With Pakistani Minister

LD1802125196 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The latest Afghan developments and the process of cooperation between Iran and Pakistan regarding the settlement of the Afghan crisis were discussed in a meeting this morning between Pakistani Foreign Secretary Najmuddin Shaikh and Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati.

At the meeting, the Pakistani foreign secretary described the points of view of the authorities of his country concerning the normalization of ties between Islamabad and Kabul and thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for its efforts in that regard.

Foreign Minister Velayati stressed the need for consultations by Iran and Pakistan on the Afghan issue and peace settlement in that country.

Iran: Deputy Minister, Pakistani Minister Discuss Afghan Issues

LD1802152696 Tehran IRNA in English 1507 GMT 18 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 18, IRNA — Senior Foreign Ministry officials of Iran and Pakistan Sunday discussed and exchanged views on the latest developments in Afghanistan and ways the two countries could help resolve the Afghan crisis.

The talks were held here between Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia-Pacific Affairs Ala'eddin Borujerdi and the visiting Deputy Foreign Minister of Pakistan Najmuddin Shaikh. [title as received]

The Pakistani official underlined Islamabad's interest in keeping continued exchange of views between Iran and Pakistan in various fields, notably the Afghan crisis.

He said Pakistan believes that armed conflict is not the answer to the Afghanistan problems, adding that any solution should be soley found in negotiations among all Afghan factions.

The Iranian official in reply underlined the need for bilateral talks over the issue and said Tehran is opposed to the ongoing armed conflicts in Afghanistan.

He added that war-mongers in Afghanistan are committing treason to the Muslim Afghan nation and the future of the country.

Borujerdi also said the Islamic Republic of Iran will continue its policy of encouraging all opposing groups to join the peace talks.

On Islamabad-Kabul relations, the Iranian official noted that encouraging the two sides towards normalization of bilateral ties is included in the agenda of Iran's talks with high-ranking Pakistani and Afghan delegations.

He hoped that Islamabad-Kabul ties will improve as soon as possible.

Iran: Deputy Foreign Minister on Afghan-Pakistani Relations

LD1802194796 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 18 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Ala'eddin Borujerdi, deputy foreign minister for Asian and Pacific affairs, insisted in an interview that Iran is seeking to resolve the current problems between Afghanistan and Pakistan and to return relations between them to normal. Noting the recent U.S. moves on the political scene in Afghanistan, he said: The presence of the United States has always caused fighting and tension in the region and for this

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reason we believe that the Afghan problem can only be resolved without interference from foreign powers, and through talks.

It should be noted that Najibollah Lafra'i, the Afghan minister of state for foreign affairs, and Najmuddin Shaykh, permanent secretary in Pakistan's Foreign Ministry, are in Tehran in connection with resolving the Afghan problem and reducing the Kabul-Islamabad tension.

Iran: Lafra'i Urges Elections, Dialogue in Afghanistan

LD1902161696 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 19 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. [Najibollah] Lafra'i, Afghanistan's minister of state for foreign affairs, emphasized that the ultimate solution to the crisis in Afghanistan is to hold general and free elections there. He said this morning to correspondents: The government of Afghanistan calls for a society based on justice in which everyone has an appropriate share and lives in tranquillity.

He thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for cooperating to establish peace and tranquillity in Afghanistan, and described as positive and constructive his talks with our country's senior officials.

Mr. Lafra'i pointed to the common historical, cultural, and religious factors shared between Afghanistan and Pakistan, noting: The government of Afghanistan always wishes to have good and amicable relations with Pakistan. He added: We are not opposed to Pakistan's contacts with the republics of Central Asia via Afghanistan. But, we do think that any actions or endeavors taken in this field without the knowledge and consent of the government of Afghanistan, is incorrect.

Our correspondent's report states that Mr. Lafra'i referred to the position adopted by the government of Afghanistan in declaring that it is ready for talks with groups opposing the government. He said: The government of Afghanistan has always wanted to resolve problems through talks and understanding. He also expressed the hope that the recent stances adopted by the leader of Afghanistan's Islamic Party will lessen the crisis and improve existing conditions.

In conclusion, Mr. Lafra'i described living conditions in Kabul city as relatively normal.

Iran: Rafsanjani Holds Talks With Afghanistan's Lafra'i

LD1902120496 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 19 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Afghanistan's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mr. [Najibollah] Lafra'i was today received by President [Akbar] Hashemi-Rafsanjani and submitted to him a written message from Mr. Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of Afghanistan.

Mr. Lafra'i thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for paying special attention to the problem of Afghanistan and for our country's political and diplomatic efforts to resolve that country's crisis. He then briefed Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani on the latest political and military developments in Afghanistan.

He said: The government of Afghanistan is opposed to war and bloodshed and is ready for talks with opposition groups on the establishment of peace and stability in Afghanistan.

According to the report of the Central News Unit, President Hashemi—Rafsanjani, for his part, emphasized the need to establish peace and tranquillity in Afghanistan. He said: The Islamic Republic of Iran is prepared to assist in reducing the hardship of the Muslim people of Afghanistan and in the reconstruction of that country once the conflict there comes to an end.

The president hoped that with the assistance of all Islamic countries, the latest diplomatic efforts to halt the war in Afghanistan will bear fruit.

Iran: Rafsanjani, Pakistani Envoy Discuss Afghan Crisis

LD1902141096 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 19 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President [Akbar] Hashemi-Rafsanjani today received Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Najmuddin Shaikh.

The president emphasized strong and fraternal relations between the two Islamic countries of Iran and Pakistan, saying: The Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes the expansion of bilateral cooperation and the realization of the agreements achieved between the two countries. Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani expressed regret at the continuation of war and bloodshed in Afghanistan, saying: With a comprehensive outlook and the interests of the region and the world of Islam in mind, Iran has repeatedly drawn the attention of different warring groups and Islamic and international forums to the consequences of war and tension in Afghanistan.

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He explained: Afghanistan is in urgent need of peace, consensus, and reconstruction and it should work toward the achievement of peace and tranquillity by concentrating on serving the suffering people of that country and on its reconstruction.

Mr. Najmuddin Shaikh, for his part, noted the close and firm relations between Iran and Pakistan, saying: The strength of the two countries' relations is such that it will never cave in under the influence of some regional developments.

He reported on the outcome of his talks in Tehran and pointed to Iran and Pakistan's common viewpoints toward Afghanistan's crisis. He said: Pakistan is against the continuation of war and fratricide in Afghanistan, and, just like Iran, it considers talks and political understanding as the only way to end the war there.

The Pakistani foreign secretary also thanked our country for its political efforts to resolve the crisis in Afghanistan.

Iran: Construction Minister Meets With Visiting Afghan Minister

LD2102211696 Tehran IRNA in English 1654 GMT 21 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 21, IRNA — At a meeting between the visiting Afghan Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Najibollah Lafra'i and Iranian Minister of Construction Jihad Gholamreza Foruzesh, different subjects of mutual interest including rural development, manpower management, agriculture and cattle breeding, management of natural resources and ways and means for exchange of expertise in various fields were discussed.

Foruzesh said that cultural and religious commonalities shared between Iran and Afghanistan, were an essential basis for the promotion bilateral cooperation.

The Afghan minister said in the meeting that his country is willing to extend relations with the islamic nation of Iran and make use of Iran's expertise in this context.

He hoped that the joint economic commission of the two countries will be held in the near future.

Iran: Commentary Says Iraqi Generals' Return to Baghdad 'Preplanned'

LD2102204696 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in Persian 1916 GMT 21 Feb 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday Husayn Kamil Hasan, the former Iraqi minister of industries and the designer of Iraq's arms program and Saddam Husayn's fugitive son-in-law, and those fugitives accompanying him unexpectedly returned to Iraq six months after seeking asylum in Jordan. They were pardoned by Saddam. This unprecedented event in Iraq has strengthened the probability that the flight by Husayn Kamil Hasan and his followers was carried out by a predetermined Iraqi plan. From the beginning, when Saddam Husayn's sons-in-law fled to Jordan, political experts did not reject the probability that their flight took place according to a preplanned program, but since Husayn Kamil Hasan declared the objective of his flight was to prepare the grounds for toppling Saddam Husayn's rule, everyone's attention was focused on the fact that the White House has played the main role in the flight of the designer of Iraq's arms programs. A factor which demonstrated American intervention in preparing the grounds for the flight of Saddam's sons-in-law to Jordan was the swift political exploitation of the event by America in order to exert further pressure on Iraq, its efforts for advancing the plan for the dismemberment of Iraq, and the realization of the process of compromise.

Although that probability still holds, Saddam's fugitive sons-in- law's recent return to Iraq strengthened the likelihood that their flight and subsequent return was planned by the ruling Ba'th Party in Iraq. From the point of view of political experts, Husayn Kamil Hasan's flight, with its declared objective struggling to topple Saddam's rule, his subsequent change of mind, and his return to Iraq, brought Saddam a propaganda and political opportunity for him to instill in his domestic and foreign opponents the idea that there is no one to replace him and, moreover, the toppling of the Ba'thist Iraqi administration is impossible under present conditions even if it is instigated by Saddam's relatives or Ba'thist members. That is particularly so since in the interim Saddam, by carrying out elections in Iraq, has tried to strengthen his image domestically.

On the other hand, by planning the flight of General Husayn Kamil Hasan and his contact with U.S. officials, Baghdad tried to pretend that all Iraq's military information has been put at the UN's disposal, and the continuation of pressure to obtain more information has lost its urgency. Anyhow, notwithstanding what factor has been the most effective in the flight of Saddam's sons- in-law to Jordan, their recent return to Iraq creates the probability that America — by making a pretext that the information given to the United Nations by Husayn Kamil Hasan is not that reliable — stresses its stance, namely the continuation of sanctions against Iraq. Thus the fate of the Iraqi people will be overshadowed for a further period by the existing political games between the Iraqi Government and those who benefit from the continuation of the international sanctions against Iraq.

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Iran: Commentary Speculates Possible Fate of Iraq's Husayn Kamil

LD2102215096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 21 Feb 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Iraqi President Saddam Husayn's son-in-law, Husayn Kamil Hasan, who had defected to Jordan on 8 August, returned to Iraq on Tuesday, 20 February.

Kamil Hasan's brother and Saddam's two daughters who accompanied him have also returned with Kamil Hasan, formerly Iraq's industries minister and in charge of the country's military industries.

All of them had described the situation in Iraq as critical, calling for Saddam Husayn's downfall. Saddam Husayn called them traitors and demanded that Jordan extradite them. The Jordan's King Husayn refused and called for a change of government in Iraq. The Iraqi leader has also claimed that Kamil Hasan took a large sum of money with him before leaving the country.

During the past six and a half months, Saddam Husayn's son-in-law tried to attract the attention of many opposition groups in Baghdad in order to present himself as the number one adversary of the Iraqi government. There are rumors that even he intended to become president after dislodging his father-in-law from the helm of power. However, Iraqi opposition groups, who still remembered Kamil Hasan's role in suppressing the Iraqi people's uprising in 1991 and his participation in Baghdad's military projects, showed no tendency to cooperate with him. Hence, Jordan granted asylum to Saddam Husayn's son-in-law in the hope of becoming a refuge for Iraqi opposition factions, but of course turned out to be a failure.

Jordan's King Husayn, who by sheltering the defected Iraqis in fact suspended his close ties with Baghdad, cleared the way for a boost in Saudi-Kuwaiti ties.

Meanwhile some reports indicated that the Jordanian king's support for Husayn Kamil Hasan was declining. Therefore, Saddam's son-in-law, who was experiencing deep isolation, announced some time ago that he had decided to return to his homeland. Iraq's council of revolution command, headed by Saddam Husayn, accepted to allow Kamil Hasan and those with him to return to Iraq. The council's decision, which was made public on Tuesday 20 February, astounded a great many observers. Of course the defectors' decision to return to Baghdad had had similar repercussions for after the defection, Kamil had provided the United States and the UN disarmament commission with new information on Iraq's attempts to hide its weapons' programs.

In view of the Iraqi regime's record of killing all its adversaries, Saddam Husayn's son-in-law's final fate is far from clear, unless due to their close relationship with the Iraqi president, he might be spared such a dismal destiny though Saddam Husayn has earlier shown no hesitation in taking revenge.

Iran: Significance of Russian-Indian Ties, U.S. Stance Viewed

NC2202081096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 22 Feb 96

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] News agencies report that following a four-year interruption, India and Russia are now ready to resume their defense cooperation. These reports indicate that in the days to come the two countries will sign five major agreements on the sale of Russian arms to India, agreements totalling $3.5 billion.

These agreements are being signed when Russia and India are trying to raise their relations to the level they were before the Soviet Union disintegrated.

India plays a significant role as a relatively important regional power in safeguarding peace and stability in the Indian subcontinent and southwest Asia. For years India implemented its military and economic policies with Russia's financial and military assistance. But with the end of the Cold War and the emergence of differences between New Delhi and Moscow on mutual debts, bilateral relations deteriorated. But time and significant international developments along with mutual needs found the two countries on the road to normalizing relations and cooperation.

India's position neighboring Pakistan; the effect of this neighborliness on the Central Asian countries; and India's and China's sharing borders show India's political significance for Russia. The noteworthy role New Delhi can play in preserving a strategic balance in the Indian Ocean has found Russia considering consolidating relations as necessary, especially in the field of defense.

More important is that, apart from ensuring an income from the sale of arms to India, Russia's objective in getting closer to India under these conditions and the signing of defense agreements with New Delhi is to make use of economic and trade aspects, because Russia intends to solve many of its economic problems through a more active role in Asian markets. In return, India intends to use Russia's advanced military technology

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to strengthen its military structure and to modernize its military fields, particularly its air force.

It seems that despite America's disagreement with closer relations between India and Russia and in view of the speed of economic reforms and the problems stemming from them, these two countries have reached the important conclusion that if they are not decisive about new geopolitical alliances they will lose their significance. Thus Moscow and New Delhi are trying to maintain their growing relations, which is a guarantee for their continuing economic growth, and trying not to allow this process to be affected by American intervention in the region.

Iran: Allegations After Coup Attempt Show Bad Feeling Within GCC

LD2102134496 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1053 GMT 21 Feb 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Greetings dear listeners. Let me draw your attention to today's political commentaries.

The government of Qatar announced yesterday that it had thwarted an attempt by some of that country's senior officers and police forces to carry out a military coup. According to reports, about 40 people were involved in the coup, led by nine officers from Qatar's armed forces.

It was announced after the defeat of the coup that the main agents behind it had fled Qatar. However, some of the people involved were arrested and are currently being interrogated. Apart from announcing that it had been unsuccessful, Qatari officials have not released many details about the coup. They have described the act as a conspiracy by a group of saboteurs, who received their orders from abroad, and they said that it was aimed at overthrowing Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, the amir of Qatar.

In the latest announcement, the Qatari foreign minister described the former amir of Qatar as the main agent behind the coup. He stated: He embarked on this coup with the assistance of some Persian Gulf countries. In his remarks, the Qatari foreign minister added: Some of the people involved in the coup were from [Saudi] Arabia and Bahrain. [passage omitted]

The Qatari foreign minister's remarks about the involvement of some member countries of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] in the unsuccessful coup arises from the suspicion and bad feeling that exists between Qatar and the other members of the council. [passage omitted]

In the wake of the unsuccessful coup in Qatar, this country has called for an emergency meeting of the heads of state of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council. Qatar is trying to explain the coup to the council members and, in view of the fact that it proved unsuccessful, use it in some way in order to consolidate the foundations of its power.

Iran: Commentary Criticizes U.S. Policy Toward Syria

LD1902161196 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1100 GMT 19 Feb 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Greetings dear listeners. Let me draw your attention to today's political commentaries.

In the wake of the unfruitful talks between Syria and the Zionist regime, the United States declared that Syria would remain on the list of countries supporting terrorism. The White House had announced earlier that, if an agreement were signed between Damascus and Tel Aviv, Syria would be removed from that list.

The White House usually labels those countries which resist U.S. policies and which try to confront its quest for hegemony, as terrorist. The United States exerts extensive propaganda pressure on countries which oppose it and, thereby, tries to mobilize public opinion against those countries.

From the moment Syria placed itself in opposition to U.S. policies in the Middle East, became a frontline combatant against the Zionist regime, and tried to thwart that regime's acts of aggression in coordination with combatant Palestinian and Lebanese groups, it was named a terrorist country by the United States.

With the start of the process of compromise in the Middle East, and the commencement of talks between Damascus and Tel Aviv, the United States tried to use this point as a lever to force Syria into granting concessions to the Zionist regime. It raised the prospect of eliminating Syria from the list of countries supporting terrorism as a tempting bait at the time of the talks, in the hope of influencing Syria and bringing about greater flexibility in that country's position. However, with Syria's insistence on its position, demanding unconditional Israeli withdrawal from the Golan and the implementation of UN resolutions in this regard, the United States stressed Syria's continued presence on that list once again.

The United States is trying to use this issue to put pressure on Syria in order to bolster Israel's position

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in the next round of talks between Damascus and Tel Aviv which are due to resume on 26 February. Syria responded to this U.S. measure by announcing that it would never succumb to political maneuvers. Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad rejected U.S. accusations about Syria and terrorism and described the struggles of the people of that country as a defense of their own territory and as an effort to repulse aggression. He said: This country will never be blackmailed by being described as a supporter of terrorism.

Political observers believe that in accusing Syria of supporting terrorism, and in repeating this charge, the United States is trying to place Syria in a position in which it will see the removal of its name from the list as a concession, such that it will be prepared to grant the concessions demanded by the Zionist regime in exchange. However, it does not seem likely that Syria, which has endured years of U.S. propaganda pressure will be affected by this psychological pressure and forgo its vital interests by allowing the Zionist regime to achieve its aims.

Iran: 'Widening' EU-U.S. Rift Over Sanctions Against Iran

LD2002163596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 20 Feb 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On Monday February 19, a British Foreign Ministry spokesman, talking before a number of IRNA reporters in London, said: The British government opposes the U.S. policy of isolating Iran. The British official further emphasized: London tries to encourage Washington not to tighten the economic embargo against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The British Foreign Ministry spokesman's statement comes at a time when, based on some western media reports, a number of U.S. representatives have started new provocative measures to pass a bill to impose an economic embargo against Iran. Despite the British government's common views with the U.S. government at times, it has, on various occasions, expressed its outright opposition to the imposition of economic sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In direct talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton, British Prime Minister John Major has expressed his discontent with the continuation of America's hostile stance against Iran. British Foreign Minister Malcolm Rifkind and his opposite number in the U.S. Warren Christopher have also held talks over the issue.

At any rate, it is obvious that the opposition of European countries to economic sanctions against Iran is not only confined to Britain. French President Jacques Chirac also during his recent trip to the U.S. voiced objections to America's policy over Iran. The European Commission later on also sent a protest note to U.S. Congress representatives. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, in a similar reaction, described U.S. posturing towards Iran as a violation of the World Trade Organization's regulations.

On the whole, such reactions indicate a widening rift between the EU and America. Political-economic experts believe EU member states, through their conduct, are trying to make the U.S. realize the time of unilateral decision making has come to an end and the U.S. has no alternative but to accept that, in view of the new political and economic conditions prevailing over the world, Washington is not in a position to overlook international and economic norms and relations just to fulfil its own political interests and goals. Hence, British government officials have termed the ratification of the bill on economic sanctions to be imposed against Iran in the U.S. Congress a catastrophe (?in legislature), assuming that the implementation of such a bill would definitely lead to more and more differences between Europe and America.

Iran: Tehran on Geneva Disarmament Summit, Stance of 'Big Powers'

NC2202093896 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 22 Feb 96

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] Representatives from various countries will attend the World Disarmament Conference in Geneva to discuss the treaty on a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests. Foreign Minister Dr. Velayati left for Geneva yesterday and will address the conference on the Islamic Republic's stance on nuclear tests and on the treaty on a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests.

The ban on nuclear tests is considered to be the first step in the nuclear disarmament process. A comprehensive treaty and its implementation will limit the possibility of a qualitative and quantitative expansion of nuclear arms. The treaty can strengthen existing nuclear disarmament mechanisms, such as the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] in which nonnuclear countries have undertaken not to attempt to acquire nuclear arms. But, since this pact legitimizes the nuclear weapons in the hands of the big powers, many countries consider the NPT to be discriminatory and unjust.

Since a treaty banning nuclear tests will commit the nuclear powers who sign it more than anyone else, it

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will help to overcome some existing weaknesses in the NPT. Despite all the global efforts too date, the nuclear powers have shown no desire to sign the treaty on a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests. Although they have constantly paid great lipservice to disarmament in their propaganda, they have tried to achieve greater nuclear capabilities before any treaties are signed and have thus resorted to repeated nuclear tests.

If the nuclear powers agree to halt their nuclear tests and not to conduct any new tests, various countries will have greater hope that steps toward nuclear disarmament will follow. In this way the countries that are pessimistic about the big powers' efforts regarding nuclear disarmament will adopt a more positive outlook toward the existing disarmament mechanism. Instilling this optimism and hope can boost determination to overcome the nuclear threat and strengthen world disarmament processes.

Iran: 'Passive Policy' Toward Turkey Viewed

NC1602141896 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 13 Feb 96 p 2

[Editorial: "Passive Policy Towards Turkey Not Acceptable"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Simultaneous with the pouring by millions of Iranians into the streets of the country and sympathizers worldwide celebrating the anniversary of the Islamic Revolution, the government in Ankara allowed elements of the terrorist Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization (MKO) to hold anti-Iran rallies on its territory. The Turkish government's show of sympathy with the terrorist group stems partly from its subservience to certain interest groups in the West which are under pressure from their Zionist big business patrons, and partly from the Turkish desire to join the European Union (EU).

In its keen desire to join the EU, the government of Ankara has swallowed all sorts of humiliations heaped upon it by the West even at the expense of the aspirations and ideals of its citizens. The ghost of Kamal Ataturk in the de-Islamization of Turkey still follows the country today. However, the results of recent parliamentary elections point to the fact that the Turkish government cannot afford to continue ignoring the Islamic ideals of its people.

Suppressing people's sentiments and religious attachments will definitely backfire. Turkish Muslims have already begun to react to the anti-lsiamic policies of their government. The clearest indicator of such a reaction is the people's vote for the Refah Party.

The government in Ankara, if it heeds the sentiments, feelings and religious attachments of its citizens, must distance itself from terrorist groups like the MKO.

Regrettably, since the victory of the Islamic Revolution the Turkish government prefers to take advantage of Iran's good neighborly policy and brotherly relations whenever it sees profitable.

As the sole superpower of the post-Cold War era, the U.S. has not been able to bring Iran to its knees. In desperation, it encourages a dependent country like Turkey to harbor anti-Iran terrorists, providing them facilities and immunities to hold anti-Iran demonstrations on its day of special rejoicing for having been freed from the clutches of imperialism.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry should not allow the incident to go without passing appropriate measures to prevent a repeat. Passivity can only encourage similar acts of insult to the Grand Revolution.

"Good fences make good neighbors," as the poem goes. By mere condemnation of Turkey's support for an enemy, the Foreign Ministry is not promoting a policy of good neighborliness but encouraging obstinancy. The government of Ankara should know that it stands to be hurt by a similar attitude next time.

Iran: Commentary on Saudi King's Resumption of Power

LD2202125696 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] The Saudi Arabian King Fahd, on Wednesday 21 February, announced that following the recovery from illness he will once again resume administration of the country. [passage omitted]

Many observers, regarding the illness and two-month absence of the Saudi king, believe that his return to the scene of power will be of less effect than before. These experts also rise this possibility that Fahd's return to the scene may have been due to the pressure of the Saudi dynasty, who have no desire for political and economic reforms.

Meanwhile, it seems that the period of Fahd's absence from the scene of power has been of most advantage to Amir 'Abdallah, the crown prince and the head of Saudi's National Guard. Fahd's faith in 'Abdallah, leaving the administration of the country to him for two months, will be a good record for the crown prince to refer to — to prove he is worthy of becoming a king — especially since as expected Prince 'Abdallah, during the short period of his rule, improved Riyadh's ties with Arab and regional countries to an extent. During this

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time Malik [King] Husayn and 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, the leaders of Jordan and Yemen, who did not have good relations with Saudi Arabia because of their support of Iraq in the 1991 oil war, have visited Riyadh.

Meanwhile analysts believe that Amir 'Abdallah is still considered as a cross between traditionalists and reformists by the Saudi dynasty. He is also more acceptable to opponents regarding his religious beliefs and personal characteristics, although some of his internal and foreign policies are also criticized. Anyhow, Fahd has yet been unable to resolve the economic and political problems left from the oil war [Gulf war] and it does not seem that his slow trend will satisfy the government opponents. This is why the poor health of the Arabian king has brought his ability for overpowering the problems under question more than ever before.

Iran: Official Cited on Ground Forces' 'Self-Sufficiency Jihad'

NC1602142796 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES Special Issue on Dawn of Victory in English 8 Feb 96 p 8

[Report by TEHRAN TIMES Service]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran — The Deputy Director of Self-Sufficiency Jihad (the Iranian Ground Forces wartime organization established to handle repair work of damaged equipment), Yunes Ma'sumzadeh, in an exclusive interview with the TEHRAN TIMES elaborated on the activities of the organization throughout the period of the revolution and imposed war and the postwar period.

He said that prior to the revolution, many foreign advisors were hired to undertake logistical and technical work for the Ground Forces, a number of whom were also connected with the Army Aviation Service.

With the victory of the Islamic revolution, they were phased out and members of the organization integrated into the army and Ground Forces personnel, Ma'sumzadeh said.

"Its establishment during the imposed war and provision of necessary facilities and human resources enabled the Self-Sufficiency Jihad to start its activities mainly in the much-need manufacture [as published] of spare parts," the deputy director said, adding that these were in shortage during the war period.

He said that by constructing Ground Forces factories, Self-Sufficiency Jihad started work in improvising equipment, citing 1,000 tanks as having been reconstructed during the imposed war. He went on to say that after the ceasefire the equipment needed to be modernized and toward this end the Leader, Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, in 1992 issued directives to build tanks and helicopters in the army and to be abreast with developments called for by a modern army, with particular reference to equipment.

"Experts were gathered and resulted in the construction of the Zolfaqar tank which was very powerful," Ma'sumzadeh said.

The deputy director of Self-Sufficiency Jihad stressed that swift movement is one of the main factors to consider in the success of any Ground Force activity.

"In order to send equipments swiftly to the warfronts, there is need for quick movement," he said, adding that the Leader gave directives to modernize a special trailer to carry tanks to the warfronts in a program code named "Baber 400."

Speaking of aviation equipment, Ma'sumzadeh said the Ground Forces undertook work to improve the helicopter's structure in the Army Aviation Service.

Asked to elaborate on the Zolfaqar tank and "Baber 400" the deputy director said that the design and construction of the tank commenced four years ago and was first displayed for public view last year.

"The tank weighs 40 tons, is equipped with a 100 horsepower engine and a 125 mm cannon ball, and has a speed of 70 km on flat surface," stressing that no foreign help was solicited in the design and production of the tanks.

"Baber 400 is a Russian-inspired trailer which originally had some deficiencies in the main system which were overcome, and is now a very capable trailer," Ma'sumzadeh said.

He underlined Self-Sufficiency Jihad's independent character, saying it relies purely on Iranian expertise.

In response to a reporter's question on whether the organization imitates the war equipment of other countries, particularly those of Southeast Asia, Ma'sumzadeh said the imitation of warfare is common in many countries but that variations in the climatic condition and altitude in various parts of Iran makes it necessary to device warfare equipment with features specially suited for conditions in Iran.

Asked to comment on stepped-up accusations of enemies that Iran is seeking to produce nuclear weapons, he reiterated that the country's army research centers are in no way active regarding nuclear weapons, and that the nuclear power which is sought to be produced is only for electricity purposes.

"The enhancement of the military budget is only to modernize and improve equipment for warfare, including the

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ones which have remained from the pre-revolution era," he said.

He stressed the necessity of military research as a means of improving the country's military preparedness to thwart the plots of arrogant powers, saying Iran is no exception to regional states who believe in the same principle and that Iran is not behind when it comes to military preparedness.

He said the organization may be considered a success when considering the contributions it has made to the technical, scientific and industrial needs of the army, and that present projects under consideration reveal a movement towards self-sufficiency in the army.

Iran: Rafsanjani Addresses Management of Saderat Bank

LD1702134396 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 17 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that in recent years the amount of people's deposits in banks increased by 30 percent and this shows that trust in the country's banking system is increasing. He added: Winning the people's trust will attract the circulating cash. And the cash can be invested to increase production, to create employment, and to improve the country's economy.

Addressing the top managers of the Saderat Bank this morning, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani went on: It is essential that the banks should participate in large investments and key projects. And in addition to investing, the banks should grant loans to applicants who need the money to improve their business. Such investments will serve the government's objective of solving economic problems in society. [passage omitted]

The president stressed the importance of vigilance by bank managers to promote an attitude of trust among the bank employees. He said: In view of the fact that most bank employees are trustworthy individuals, we must not allow their good names and the reputation of a large and extensive network to be undermined by a handful [of former managers] through their wicked action.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani pointed out: A supervision system should be set up to identify and reward hard-working employees. And such a system should also carefully investigate mismanagement and deal with wrongdoers and guilty individuals.

Before the president's remarks, the director-general of the Saderat Bank presented a report on the bank's performance. He said: The level of deposits in the bank increased on average by 75 percent a year. And more than 46 percent of these are long-term deposits. He added: By the end of Azar this year [20 December 1995], the figure of deposits in the Saderat Bank exceeded 14,453,700,000,000 rials. [passage omitted]

Iran: Tehran Militant Clergy Member on Elections

NC2102113896 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 8 Feb 96 p 12

[Interview with His Eminence Ayatollah Mahdavi-Kani, "outstanding member of the Tehran Militant Clergy," by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [ETTELA'AT] As far as the principles of reconstruction, progress, and social justice are concerned, some people believe that if there is worthwhile development, social justice will also be established. What is the plan for progress and development in Islamic Iran and how can social justice be achieved?

[Mahdavi-Kani] Some people consider development to be the main issue and social justice to be a secondary one. I believe this is incorrect. I could even refer to South Korea, India, and some other countries as places where social justice is placed above development, which is a secondary issue. In other words, development should be a target for the consolidation of social justice.

No country can have our country's pattern for progress. We are a pattern for ourselves. Our pattern should come from the research and activities of the scientists and scholars and those who sympathize with the revolution. We are the ones who should write our own prescription. No prescription from abroad can help us. In their development, the aforementioned countries have envisaged the use of relations with America and have delineated shares for the cartels and trusts from the beginning. We, who have been living with America for 17 years, should know that we can never give in to hegemonism. We should stand up for ourselves. We have dozens of economic researchers and scholars at home and abroad who have an affection for the revolution. Of course there are some who have no attachment or devotion to the system and the people. We are not speaking about them. The ones who are committed to these people and have feelings for this country's independence should work toward this end.

Social justice is part of our pattern of development. The preservation of our aspirations and the safeguarding of the people, and especially meeting the needs of the deprived are on our agenda. We do not want to place mountains of wealth in the hands of a few in the name of development, as is happening in the neighboring countries and in countries that claim they can serve

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as our pattern for development. Our principles are accepted by all economic experts and scholars. The people and the leadership accept them; many people accept them. But unfortunately, there is some illogical and useless resistance in the system's specialized sector. In the Emam Sadeq University and in the country's large universities, thousands of people are studying and teaching economics. We should use these people as soldiers in the front line of the country's struggles for economic independence and for ensuring the needs of our Muslim nation.

[ETTELA'AT] Do you mean to say that we should not rely in any way on foreign countries for development and reconstruction?

[Mahdavi-Kani] I did not say no reliance. I referred to reliance that will lead to dependence and will threaten our nation's grandeur. That kind of reliance is forbidden. We have cooperation with the world and economic and political relations with all nations and governments. But we should know that it is possible to progress and develop without America. The world is so vast today that we can have space to breathe and to disregard the enemy's propaganda. Our nation is brave, and with our alert leadership, we can achieve reconstruction.

[ETTELA'AT] How do you define freedom and how does it differ here from freedom in the West?

[Mahdavi-Kani] Freedom is when man is freed from all the bonds that prevent him from achieving salvation. [passage omitted]

The definition of freedom in the West is different from our nation's interpretation. Our nation considers its freedom to lie in obeying divine decrees and knows there is no one who cares more about granting man his freedom than God. In the West, obedience to God is considered to be contrary to the freedom of man. Most Western governments have included the separation of religion from politics, or so-called secularism, in their constitutions. When we remove God from our life, we will have the same situation that rules in the West, where whoever is stronger is more free. This is tantamount to the law of the jungle but based on a new rule where the ruler chooses the jungle.

This is the principle behind the logic of the American attempt to deprive nations of their freedom and independence. They say: Since I am stronger, I have interests in the Persian Gulf and in the Indian Ocean; I have interests everywhere. With this logic of despotism, they have built a world in which they threaten the freedom of nations. The same situation exists in their countries too. In countries where the rulers do not believe in God, the freedom of nations is defined by dangerous Mafia bands, in which each person has the right to be free as long as he does not threaten the interests of the dominating and powerful groups!

[ETTELA'AT] What do you think about the freedom of parties and the people's political participation in the system?

[Mahdavi-Kani] I will say nothing for or against parties. The Constitution has clarified this issue. But we should know that parties are not the sole means to popular political participation. We should not interpret political participation to mean the "presence" or the "existence" of parties. The people participate in political affairs through contacts with their 'ulema and their elders. Our revolution has another pattern for participation. That the people go to the mosques day and night to pray, have contacts with their religious leaders, discuss political and social issues, and have contacts with other pious and committed nonreligious worshippers is a type of political presence. [passage omitted]

Parties and political formations may say the right thing to people and may act correctly.

If people see God-seeking people who believe in divine ethics and have constructive and useful programs to serve the revolution and the country they will be attracted to them.

Our Muslim youths who reach political maturity should be informed of the ideas and views of groups that have correct and clear ideas and views. They should receive political training and prepare themselves to undertake great political responsibilities.

[ETTELA'AT] What is the role of clericism in the people's political participation. What role can clericism play?

[Mahdavi-Kani] Clericism too should have a place in political issues. Our people choose the structure of our system. Clericism should help the people to build this structure correctly. Because of its important historic duty, clericism has always played the role of political guidance, control, and management of the country in popular movements throughout the past 100 years.

The relationship between clericism and the people is reciprocal.

This reciprocity is based on mutual trust, which continues with God's help. If the superpowers failed to strike it, especially during the recent Islamic movement, it is because clericism knows its historic role of politically guiding the people in a way that pleases God.

[ETTELA'AT] It is rumored that, with its monopolistic methods, the combatant clergy allows no other political

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party or group to emerge, grants no one permission to operate, and wants it all for itself. Is this true?

[Mahdavi-Kani] The [Militant] Clergy has never wanted to impose anything on anyone by force. The Clergy has relations with all the groups and parties. While we have stated that they [groups and parties] will hand in their separate lists, they have expressed their wish to hand in a common list with the Clergy. Those who accept our criteria naturally form one group. If there is free competition and all the groups offer clear positions and platforms, the people can vote in a better way. The people vote. Their luck should not depend on one person or one clerical process. It depends on how capable a group is of conveying and proving that it seeks to serve the country and that it wants to carry out its duties for God.

No group invites another to come and enjoy political participation with it. There is no reason for the Clergy to place its potential and credibility at the disposal of someone whose principles and criteria do not match those of the Clergy so that they will then accuse the Clergy of "wanting it all!"

The revolution and the system have a principle and a basis. Anyone who believes in these will be favored by the Clergy.

In Tehran, we need a list of 30 people. But there are more than 100 competent people, all of whom are accepted by us. But we cannot include all the 100 people on the list of candidates. We must choose only 30. This does not mean a monopolistic attitude. The law has granted Tehran the right to have only 30 candidates.

[ETTELA'AT] Who is a good candidate in your opinion?

[Mahdavi-Kani] If you want the ideal candidate, I can refer to martyr Modarres, who was an ideal candidate in the full sense of the word and was someone who cared for religion and for the people. A candidate should know what the people are going through, what problems they are facing in life, what their rights are, and how these rights can be vindicated.

A good candidate should be courageous, pious, scholarly, and aware. He should be able to recognize the enemy's ploys and spend most of his time carrying out his duties as a candidate.

[ETTELA'AT] What do you think ensures healthy elections and what can guarantee good and popular elections?

[Mahdavi-Kani] How fair the elections are depends on the candidates observing political ethics and on the people being aware and taking care to elect the right person. After four elections we should have achieved a level of ethics in elections such that when political observers outside assess them they can see political maturity.

How fair the elections are depends on the correct performance by executive officials—from the executive delegations to the observers. The executive officials' approach should be such that it does not harm anyone's rights. [passage omitted]

[ETTELA'AT] What is the latest result of the Tehran Militant Clergy's examination of the list of its candidates and what criteria have you included?

[Mahdavi-Kani] You can put this question to the spokesman for the Tehran Militant Clergy. I am not the spokesman.

I know that belief in the system, practical obligation toward Islam and toward the supreme jurisconsult, efficacy, and capability are among the qualifications a candidate should have to carry out his duties as a deputy. These are among the criteria set by the Tehran Militant Clergy.

[ETTELA'AT] What will the future Majles be like? Will the current majority be maintained?

[Mahdavi-Kani] What the future Majles will be like and whether the current majority will be maintained depend on the people's votes. The people will judge, on the basis of their understanding, who are the followers of the imam's line and who are the people who will truly serve the country. We must accept the people's votes. The people know who they should trust with this divine duty. We should get accustomed to giving in to the people's votes.

[ETTELA'AT] Do you have any advice for the people on the elections?

[Mahdavi-Kani] Our dear people have always been alert and have always been present on every scene. The elections will manifest the national will with regard to how one of the largest institutions of our Islamic system should be run. Everyone should go to the polling stations so that we can show the world our interest in our political future.

God willing, these elections will be held in a respectable way; we will all strive to see that they are as spectacular as possible.

[ETTELA'AT] Thank you very much for sparing us some of your time.

[Mahdavi-Kani] I thank you too.

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Nepal

Nepal: Foreign Minister Calls Talks in India 'Very Fruitful'

BK1902070696 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 19 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Nepalese foreign minister, Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani, has said their talks with Indian leaders during Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba's visit to New Delhi were very fruitful. Addressing newsmen in Kathmandu, Dr. Lohani said Indian investors are ready to assist Nepal in setting up export promotion zones to reduce its trade imbalance. He said both the sides have agreed to examine the possibility of an alternative transit route for Nepalese trade with third countries through Bangladesh.

Releasing to the press the joint statement on Mr. Deuba's visit to India, Dr. Lohani said both countries have expressed their determination to fight terrorism and reiterated their commitment not to allow any activity on their territory prejudicial to the security of the other.

Nepal: Energy Deal With India Clears Way for Private Sector

BK2102141896 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 21 Feb 96

[Report by a POST reporter—received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KATHMANDU, Feb 20—The recent deal with India during Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba's visit has cleared way for private-sector investment in the power sector of the two countries, Minister for Water Resources Pashupati Shumsher Rana said today.

"Exploitation of our huge power potential is not always possible through government resources," he said, adding that the role of private sector investment was therefore highly significant.

Minister Rana was briefing reporters here on Tuesday about the achievements made in water resources front during the Prime Minister's weeklong official visit to India.

Nepal and India signed a power trade agreement in Bombay, the business capital of India on Saturday, allowing independent mutual power deals on government, semi-government and private sector levels between two countries.

Nepal Electricity Act of 1993 provides for the sale of its power to India and also for the import of power from that country. But so far, India does not have any law in this regard.

"The signing of the power purchase deal will now activate India for making the necessary law. I believe the process will commence soon," Minister Rana said and added that the agreement was "essential" to give a "clear-cut direction" to the bilateral trade in power.

Encouragement to the private sector is also a part of the two countries' professed commitment for economic liberalism. "The power purchase deal will contribute a lot for a speedy development of power sector," Rana said.

India has a big market potential for Nepal's electricity. A large amount of power produced from the 6450 megawatt Pancheshwor multipurpose project can be easily utilized in India, while a relatively small portion would suffice for Nepal's domestic need.

The power trade agreement also allows third countries to invest in Indo-Nepal power projects. Minister Rana says third country investment was possible "even in Indo-Nepal border rivers", but such an investment will have to be sanctioned by both the countries.

Under the deal, investors of Nepal who want to sell power to India will be treated on equal terms as investors in India. The same will be true for Nepal as well.

The power trade through private sector will yield direct sum in the form of royalties and export tax to the governments of both the countries. It will create new employment opportunities and also contribute to minimise the vast trade deficit of Nepal vis-a-vis India.

Minister Rana also expressed his optimism that the impact of the Indo-Nepal power trade deal may be seen soon. For ensuring the maximum benefit from the projects in question, he said, a team will be activated through National Planning Commission which will prepare up-to-date input-output tables and work accordingly to secure optimum benefits.

The agreement's validity is for 50 years, which is subject to extension through mutual understanding.

Nepal: Bhutanese Refugees Begin Another Appeal March

BK2002153996 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 20 Feb 96

[Report by a POST reporter—received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MECHI BRIDGE, Jhapa, Feb 19—Over 300 Bhutanese refugees started yet another appeal march to Bhutan today.

The section 144 Criminal Procedure Code imposed on the Bhutanese refugees undertaking a peaceful march to

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their own country still existed a hindrance at the Indo-Nepal border. The prohibitory order expires tomorrow as per the instruction on the warning post. When they were intercepted by the Indian police this afternoon, the marchers were adamant to proceed ahead tomorrow as the section 144 expires by then. Accordingly, they have started a sit-in demonstration.

A relay hunger strike by the 85 marchers detained in the Jalpaiguri jail, which began on February 14, ends today. Their demand is the unconditional release of the appeal marchers detained in Jalpaiguri and Siliguri jails and a free passage to proceed to their country.

The marchers in Jalpaiguri jail have written an appeal to the Prime Minister of India and the Chief Minister of West Bengal on February 17 with regard to their hunger strike. They have also appealed for India's intervention in solving the Bhutanese refugee crisis. However, the Indian authorities have not shown any response to their call so far. As decided by them earlier, the 85 will start an indefinite fast from tomorrow. Their health has tremendously deteriorated.

Meanwhile, the female members from among the 150 currently detained in Siliguri special jail will start a relay hunger strike from tomorrow.

The 273 appeal marchers arrested by the Indian authorities on February 14 are detained in the Siliguri special jail. With its serious concern to the current developments, the AMCC [expansion unknown] has sent an appeal to the Prime Minister of India PV Narashima Rao today appealing him to release 425 marchers detained in the Indian prisons immediately and unconditionally and provide them free passage. A copy of the appeal letter has also been sent to the Chief Minister of West Bengal, Jyoti Basu. The AMCC anticipates prompt response from the Government of India.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Minister Urges Opposition To Accept Dialogue Offer

BK2002043496 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 20 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Raza Rabbani, minister of state for law and parliamentary affairs, told newsmen in Karachi yesterday that the offer of talks made by the prime minister to the opposition leader should be accepted in order to promote democratic values in the country. She said the government is ready to sit with the opposition with no precondition in order to strengthen the parliamentary form of government. He criticized the reported statement of the opposition leader in the United States concerning the dissolution of Sindh assembly and removal of a representative government and said the provincial government in Sindh enjoys a majority over 70 members of provincial assembly in a house of 109.

Pakistan: MQM Leader Calls Government 'Blood Sucking Monster'

BK1902005196 (Internet) MQM NEWS in English 16 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] London, February 15, 1996 — In a faxed statement, Lead Of The Movement Altaf Hussain, said that the current government has become a "Blood Sucking Monster" and advised that all the workers must make sure that their hideouts are secure. Strongly reacting to the extra judicial execution of four MQM [Muhajir Qaumi Movement] workers, Leader Of The Movement Altaf Hussain said that government is executing its plan of eliminating MQM workers.

He warned the government and said that, "influential people of the country are supporting the barbaric acts of the current racist government of Benazir Zardari [Bhutto], and if Muhajirs are not going to be responsible for taking extreme actions in order to protect the innocent lives."

He prayed for the souls of deceased and said that Muhajir blood is not cheap and everyone responsible will pay the price and has to go through the accountability and no one would be spared.

Pakistan: 'Partial' Strike Observed in Karachi, Hyderabad

BK1702151196 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 17 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Karachi and Hyderabad, partial strike was observed today on a call given by Altaf Group. Major shopping centers remained close. Due to 27 Ramadan al-Mubarak [27th day of holy month of Ramadhan] and Saturday, all major markets, banks, schools, government and private offices were closed as per scheduled. In various parts of the [Karachi] city, the local markets, grocery shops, vegetables and fruit markets were open. Public and private transport was seen on the roads throughout the day. Law enforcing agencies have made strict security arrangements.

In Hyderabad also, the major markets remained close. However, shops remained open in Qasimabad, Hussainabad, and adjoining areas.

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Pakistan: Kashmiris Call For Tripartite Talks To Resolve Dispute

BK1802160696 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 18 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In occupied Kashmir, extensive military crackdown was carried out in downtown Srinagar and many people were tortured by troops on the spot. At Gaokadal, the troops raided a mosque with their boots on, dragged out the imam [prayer leader] and subjected him to merciless beating. Indian troops also robbed the mosque of 22,000 rupees, which was being distributed among the poor as fitrana [alms given on 'Id al-Fitr day]. Huge rallies held across Kashmir urged resolution of the crisis in the valley through talks between Pakistan, India, and the people of Kashmir. Our special correspondent Ghulam Nabi Khayal reports from New Delhi:

[Begin Khayal recording] With the observance of Kashmir Day, huge anti-India rallies were held across the valley of Kashmir. About 100,000 people unanimously adopted a resolution at Jami' mosque in Srinagar, which called for resolving the Kashmir dispute through the talks between India, Pakistan, and the people of Kashmir. The resolution said while the Indian Government talked of a dialogue, it had been flouting all human values to suppress the people of the state. Besides Hurriyat Conference Chairman Mir Waiz Umar Farooq, Professor Abdul Ghani, and Maulawi Abbas Ansari also addressed the congregation. They said India's plan to hold elections in Kashmir was a move to mislead the world opinion. In Sopor in north Kashmir, Liberation Front Chief Yasin Malik led a procession up to the martyrs graveyard in the town. He said the ongoing struggle for freedom would continue despite the repression let loose by New Delhi. The Siddiqi group chief of the front, Shabbir Siddiqi, took a vote from the people at the Hazratbal shrine, rejecting any elections and reiterated that the proposed elections would be boycotted all over the state of Jammu and Kashmir. [end recording]

Pakistan: Minister—No MFN Status to India if Conditions Not Met

BK1802101196 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 18 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The federal minister for commerce, Chaudhary Ahmad Mukhtar, says Pakistan will not extend most favored nation status to India in trade unless India meets certain conditions. Talking to newsmen in Islamabad last evening, he said India would have to withdraw subsidies on various industries and grant Pakistan overland facilities for trade with Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan. To a question, he said it is also in the interest of the people of Pakistan and India that the long-standing Kashmir dispute should be settled in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions.

The commerce minister said a delegation of Indian businessmen would be visiting Pakistan early next month at the invitation of Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry to explore trade prospects between the two countries. He said a Pakistan delegation will visit Japan next month to settle matters concerning export of mangoes to that country. The minister told a questioner that the tax reforms committee set up under his chairmanship would finalize its recommendations in a couple of months. The main job of the committee is to make tax collection system efficient and the revenue generating to full capacity.

Pakistan: Navy Commander Meets Iranian Envoy, Discusses Maneuvers

LD1702212096 Tehran IRNA in English 2109 GMT 17 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Feb. 17, IRNA — Iran's ambassador to Islamabad Mohammad-Medhi Akhundzadeh and Navy commander of Pakistan Admiral (Mansourolhaq) here Saturday reviewed Iran-Pakistan cooperation at sea.

The commander of Pakistan's Navy requested that the two neghboring countries broaden their cooperation in every area.

The Iranian ambassador reminded that two Iranian gunships would shortly arrive at Pakistan's territorial waters and observed that the two countries could mutually promote peace and stability in the region.

A second mock war operations is scheduled by the two neighboring countries next summer. The first was in the territorial waters of Pakistan last year.

Pakistan: Editorial Examines Current Situation in Afghanistan

BK2202072796 Lahore THE FRIDAY TIMES in English 22-28 Feb 96 p 1

[Editorial: "Afghan Fiasco Revisited"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The mid-February Supreme Coordination Council (SCC) meeting in Islamabad has come a cropper like its predecessors.

The Rabbani government in Kabul has denounced it along with its five-point agenda. It says Pakistan is interfering in the affairs of Afghanistan by holding such opposition meetings. Pakistan vows it sides with no faction and that the Islamabad meeting of the 'mojahedin' was not convened by it. Like always, important factions absented themselves. The Taleban

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didn't send their delegation, but the Islamabad agenda says SCC 'mojahedin' will attack Kabul if the Rabbani government attacks the Taleban. Pakistan says it has nothing to do with Taleban, but Kabul accuses it of backing it with money and weapons. While in Islamabad, Hezb leader Hekmatyar came on TV saying 'other countries' were helping Rabbani. He named India and Russia but didn't name in while implying its interference. [sentence as published]

In Pakistan almost everyone is talking at cross-purposes while pretending to articulate Pakistani self-interest. No one likes Rabbani who is universally believed to be hanging on to power beyond his legal term. Indirectly this strengthens Islamabad's stand after Pakistan's embassy was attacked and destroyed by the Kabul government. But this was supposedly triggered by Islamabad's support to Taleban who also offended Iran by taking Herat close to the Iranian border.

From here onwards, religious and Jihad circles in Pakistan part ways with Islamabad. They hate Rabbani, but they hate the Taleban more, and link them through Islamabad to the United States which is supposedly trying to encircle and reduce Iran. This schism has now deepened, forcing Jam'iyat-e-Eslami Qazi Hussain Ahmad to change sides.

His latest statement warns the government that if any move is made to dislodge the Rabbani government it will lead to war with Iran.

In one swoop, Qazi Sahib has said good-bye to the good relations he has always enjoyed with the anti-Rabbani factions inside SCC. By interpreting Iranian 'objections' in such an extreme manner he is not only telling the SCC that they should unconditionally accept the Rabbani government, but he is also reducing Pakistan's options in the forthcoming Pak-Iran-Kabul consultations in Tehran. Worst still, Qazi Sahib's interpretation of Iranian intentions contradicts the assurances held out by Iranian deputy foreign minister, 'Ala'eddin Boroujerdi during his recent visit.

Iran's importance for Pakistan is twofold. It is a strategic neighbour whose pivotal significance in Pakistan's defence has always been recognised. It is also an Islamic state held in great reverence by the people of Pakistan. American sanctions against Iran have caused a lot of connect here, and opposition religious groups have accused Islamabad of assisting the U.S. against Iran. Right-wing journalism, while siding with Hekmatyar and the SCC against Rabbani, have tried to support Iran despite its links with the Rabbani government.

Seen in the light of these facts, Qazi Sahib's latest statement can be said to be an effort to cut the Gordian knot of confusion and side with Iran because of its anti-U.S. position. Will the rest in the internally riven Milli Yakjehti-MYC also follow this line? The Council has long rejected the position taken by Islamabad; will it also reject the position of the 'mojahedin' with whom it has close links?

The Afghan civil war continues to be a royal mess, and it has not taken American conspiracy to make it so. The Indians are in it because New Delhi thinks Pakistan is 'bleeding' India in Kashmir. The Russians are on Rabbani's side to balance the Uzbeks behind Rashid Dostam. The Saudis are in Kabul because they hate Hekmayar. The Americans are not there but everyone thinks they are, through the good offices of Islamabad, and that is enough to compound the bedlam of contradictory policies being pursued by all.

Given this devil's chessboard to unravel, Metternich would have burst a vein in his head. The Iran-Pakistan-Russia-India-Uzbekistan tangle in Afghatan is the post-Cold-War era's worst mix-up. (Let us keep Ukraine's contribution to it out for the time being!) It would be unfair to expect our Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali to wave his magic wand over it to make it go away.

No one out of the neighbouring states is winning in Afghanistan. Pakistan concedes that no one party can win, and it therefore considers cooperation with in vital to any solution. It is also true that Iran's policy in Afghanistan cannot be successfully implemented without safeguarding the interests of Pakistan. The Pakhtun-Uzbek factions arrayed against Rabbani in the SCC may be disunited but their willingness to accept new prescriptions for Afghanistan is absolutely vital.

UN envoy Mohammed Mestiri is building on the assumption that President Rabbani must go, a position that no one disputes but to arrive at the broad-based interim government to replace him, Iran must work together with Pakistan. Any pressure that Pakistan must yield without safeguarding its own interests would be unrealistic.

Given the 'mojahedin' confusion, the tragedy is that not many of us seem to know what these interests are. The irreducible: wisdom that Afghan factions must all be made to agree can be enforced only if the 'interfering' neighbours themselves agree on the Afghan agenda.

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